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THE

ORDER AND METHOD

OF

INSTRUCTING CHILDREN,

WITH

STRICTURES

ON THE

MODERN SYSTEM

OF

EDUCATION,

BY

GEORGE CRABB,

AUTHOR OF A GRAMMAR AND OTHER ELEMENTARY WORKS, IN GERMAN AND FRENCH.

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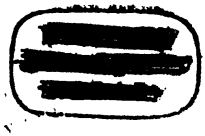

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PREFACE.

VARIOUS are the motives and expectations with which men offer their opinions to the public. But in all, the decision is in their own favor, or they would not be so infatuated as to risk the censure of others. If an author have taken the necessary precautions of reading, observing, and reflecting, he may free his performance from any glaring inaccuracies; but he can never ensure to himself a perfect exemption from error. The human mind is formed too gradually to admit of perfection in the first efforts. Nor will a life of study serve the same salutary purpose as the publication of our sentiments, and the consequent investigation that they experience from the public. With this state of mind, therefore, the author has delivered the present production to

the

the judgement of mankind in general; hoping, that whatever errors it may contain will be pointed out without disguise; and, at the same time, that every remark will be unaccompanied by that air of juvenile assurance, and useless asperity, which too often usurps the place of manly, rational, and candid criticism.

In a ſhort Time will be publiſhed,

By the ſame Author,

THE

MORAL IMPROVEMENT

OF

CHILDREN,

With regard to the Cultivation of their Habits, Taſtes, Inclinations, and Tempers.

Which will be followed by

THOUGHTS

ON

SELF-KNOWLEDGE,

Or, an Attempt to prove, that the Practice of private Virtue is THE ONLY Source of Political Happineſs.

INTRODUCTION.

To ſhow how the powers of the infant mind may be called into action, and its energies unfolded, is the object of this work. Every ſyſtem of education hitherto offered to the public attention, ſeems to tend more towards ſtoring the memory with a multiplicity of objects, than giving ſtrength and vigour to the operations of thought.

In all ages men have purſued knowledge to the detriment of wiſdom. Among the learned of the preceding centuries, the greateſt part of a man's life was ſpent in ſtoring up a copious fund of materials from the depths of antiquity; and in making the moſt abſtruſe reſearches into myſterious ſubjects, which ſerved for no purpoſe but gratifying the vain curioſity

of the enquirer. By ſuch men, therefore, nothing valuable in common life has been either ſtudied or practiſed.

The preſent age can boaſt of neither wiſdom or learning. We have not application to gain the one, nor ſteadineſs to acquire the other. We ſkim the ſurface of information, and by learning a little of every thing, we ſave ourſelves the trouble of learning enough of any thing. It would be fortunate for us if this ſuperficiality was as innocent as it is contemptible. But the two lines in Pope are well exemplified by the effects which a ſlight knowledge of things has on our minds:

> " A little knowledge is a dangerous thing,
> Drink deep, or taſte not, of the Pyerean ſpring."

It is the unavoidable conſequence of general information, to excite in the mind of a perſon, an undue opinion of his own powers, and to give him an aſſumption in judging of men and things. All that he thinks,

thinks, ſays, or does, muſt be certainly right; and nothing paſſes without the ſtamp of truth or falſhood from his aſſertion. This ſpirit of conceit united with a love of liberty, has led men into great extravagances of ſentiment and conduct, which have diſturbed the peace of ſociety, and introduced turbulence and reſtleſsneſs.

Theſe remarks apply with additional force to the youth of the preſent age. The principal object of inſtruction is to fit them for general converſation and amuſement. No ſolid accompliſhments are conceived eſſential for a young perſon to fill the ſtation allotted him. He is not taught to reaſon, but to talk; not to think, but to act. He knows a little of every thing and enough of nothing. He learns Latin by tranſlations; he becomes acquainted with French, which requires no ſtudy; he reads abridgements in hiſtory, and hears the politics of the day. Thus armed at all

points, the man of fourteen leaves ſchool and enters life. He converſes with people twice his age on ſubjects he does not underſtand. He is a free-thinker on religion and politics, becauſe it is faſhionable to reject old opinions. He uſes fine words which he has either heard uſed by others, or has collected in the courſe of his reading novels. He is very polite as far as concerns the making a bow or picking up a ladies fan, but he poſſeſſes no one ingredient of politeneſs which flows from a good heart. And to make him a perfect man, he muſt ape ſentiment without having its eſſence. Such is the ſpirit of the age, and education has caught the infection. No blame whatever can attach to the individuals engaged in the taſk of teaching. It is not the taſte of men in general to turn reformers even if they ſee reformation neceſſary. The riſk is great, the ſucceſs doubtful, and the advantage problematical. It is ſufficient for them to deliver youth into the

the hands of their parents what they themſelves are, and wiſh their ſons to be.

We need not, however, wonder at all the raſhneſs, exceſs, conceit, inconſiſtency, intemperance, and the long catalogue of follies and vices which generally attend young people upon leaving ſchool. We ſhould rather wonder if ignorant of the depravity to which youth is prone, that ſuch a crooked and narrow ſyſtem did not offer incitements to the unruly paſſions, by increaſing the means of gratification.

From reflecting youths muſt neceſſarily ſpring reflecting men. The habit of thought, like every other, if contracted at an early period, will grow up with us, and become more and more confirmed by age and experience. It is that ſpecies of habit, however, which increaſes in value, in proportion as we experience its effects, by the number of enjoyments it

affords from itſelf, and the tenfold number which it prepares us for receiving.

But we vainly expect to find reflection in age, which has not begun in infancy. Though the powers of the mind, like thoſe of the body, are ſtrengthened and invigorated by exerciſe, yet if human beings are allowed to arrive at years of maturity before they are required to think, the faculties become benumbed; both the ſtimulus and opportunity for exertion are loſt.

The idea of a child's reflecting ſeems to be ſo foreign to the minds of men in general, that they can ſcarcely refrain from laughter, at this ſtrange aſſociation. Education is a mere ſyſtem of mechaniſm. Children collect a number of ſounds to which no ideas are affixed. They learn words but not things: or if any idea be impreſſed on the mind, it is generally ſo confuſed and indiſtinct, that it perplexes rather than aſſiſts the ſubject. It is always

ways eaſier for a child to learn entirely by rote, than by the memory, imperfectly aided by the judgment. Hence it is that learning becomes ſo ſerious a drudgery to young people. It is contrary to the nature of the human mind to be contented with mere empty ſounds. Knowledge is the food of the mind, as eating and drinking are that of the body.

A new born infant is impreſſed with the ſenſation of hunger, the pain of which it will remove by taking food as ſoon as it is offered. After which the images produced by light and ſound, evidently ſtrike upon the ſenſes, and excite obſervation; houſes, animals, birds, beaſts, and men, all become the objects of its attention; and it no ſooner acquires the faculty of communicating its thoughts, than it expreſſes the wiſh to know ſomething. If the repreſentations given to the mind of the enquirer be not clear and forcible, it produces a ſlight pain of diſappointment. If, as he proceeds, more obſcuri-

ties ariſe in his examinations, he reſigns the occupation with diſguſt, and bends his thoughts to things which are more eaſily brought home to his underſtanding and feelings. A ſpirit of enquiry thus checked in infancy and childhood is ſoon loſt in the multiplicity of objects of a different nature, to which every one is willing enough to call his attention. Every age has its occupations. An infant or child has rattles and other baubles; a boy, has marbles, tops, hoops, &c.; a youth has dreſs, dancing, theatrical ſpectacles, novels, and many other ſuch frivolous amuſements. Theſe will ſerve however, but imperfectly, to lure away the tedious hours. For a boy will feel an aching void in his breaſt, when he is not in a ſtate to receive pleaſure from them. His active and unemployed mind can never remain vacant. It will always be buſy about ſomething, uſeful or otherwiſe. It muſt be accidental if it ever fix on any thing good, becauſe an inclination to be ſerviceable, requires

requires more reflection than falls to the lot of an untutored boy: but miſchief flows naturally from an attempt to do what is above the reach of our knowledge and ability. This will account for that perpetual propenſity in children to be miſchievous.

When not thus employed, a child's wearineſs will frequently engender caprice, ill-humour, fretfulneſs, and perpetual hankerings after a ſomething unknown, and unpoſſeſſed. The effects are, however, very different upon different children. There are many of ſo mild, happy, or careleſs a diſpoſition, as to be amuſed with the meereſt trifles, which lighten the weight of time, and diſpel brooding anxiety.

On the other hand, if children were not checked in the early ſtages of their obſervation, they would proceed in a regular gradation, from the ſuperficies of things, to thoſe which are leſs obvious to the ſenſes. Of all the objects which ſurround us, the

moſt external muſt, from their very nature, make the firſt and deepeſt impreſſion. A loud ſound ſtrikes upon the ear quicker than a ſhrill and harmonious note; gilded gingerbread, or a common picture, will pleaſe more than a nice drawing; a wild flower, with gaudy colours, catches the eye, while one of a paler and more delicate hue, paſſes unnoticed. A child's ſphere of obſervation would daily increaſe; and after having viewed the ſurface of things, it would be led to notice the different actions of animals, their modes of living, their foods and coverings, which would be ſucceeded, by a natural reverſion, from one ſubject to another, to obſervations on the uſes of things, animate and inanimate; as for example, the uſe of horſes, dogs, knives, plates, clocks, &c. all which ſubjects, are linked together by a natural connection between them, and conſequently between the ideas we have of them. It is by this plain and ſimple principle of aſſociation, that the compli-

cated

cated machine, the mind, may be clearly explained. And as the nature of the human mind is neceſſarily connected with its regulation, it will be my endeavour, in the following Section, to unfold it in the cleareſt manner poſſible. I do not aim at advancing any new doctrine; I rather wiſh, by a plain and undiſguiſed ſtatement of facts, to elucidate a ſentiment which is very generally received, and which ſeems to require nothing more than a clear illuſtration, to make it univerſal.

SECT. I.

ON ASSOCIATION.

THE brain is the ſenſorium, or common receptacle for all the impreſſions we receive, through the medium of the five ſenſes; ſeeing, hearing, feeling, ſmelling, and taſting. All theſe impreſſions muſt be produced by material objects, as trees, horſes, cows, the ſky, &c. From whence are produced other ideas, which are not themſelves the repreſentations of material objects, but are brought into the mind by their natural connection with the latter. Thus ideas which are the moſt remote from ſenſe, are, by different gradations, found to have their origin in ſenſible ideas. Of this connection indubitable proofs may be given, by tracing the hiſtory of man from the earlieſt periods, and by obſervations on ourſelves.

Man

Man has been in a progreſſive ſtate of improvement, in all the arts and ſciences, both neceſſary, uſeful, and pleaſing. The ſteps by which they have proceeded, have been exceedingly gradual and ſlow. Neceſſity has given riſe to thoſe arts that relate to our ſubſiſtence. But, though impelled by the moſt powerful of motives, the pain of hunger, thirſt, and cold; food and clothing, in their preſent improved ſtate, have been the offspring of many ages, and of many changes. That which attracted the attention firſt, preſented itſelf daily to the view, namely, the beaſts, birds, fiſhes, herbs, roots, dens, and caves. The attainment of the firſt gave riſe to hunting, ſhooting, fowling, and fiſhing; from whence ſprung the inventions of the bow and arrow, the net, and other inſtruments for enſnaring or deſtroying animals. Theſe animals ſerved for food, and their ſkins for clothing, whilſt caves, and hollow places, provided a ſhelter from the inclemency of the ſeaſons. Thus provided,

provided, men long continued ignorant of every thing, but what aſſailed their ſenſes every inſtant. And in this ſtate they would have continued, if accident had not placed other things within their reach, which produced ſome inventions, that either ſerved to increaſe their comforts, or to facilitate the attainment of thoſe already procured. Hence the origin of the arts, of cultivating the ground, weaving, dying, and bleaching cloth, building, &c. But the rude and imperfect manner of firſt performing theſe things, and the exceedingly ſlow ſteps with which they proceeded in every particular, will more clearly elucidate the origin of our ideas. Hiſtory does not furniſh us with the exact circumſtances which have given riſe to the particular ideas of men in forming deſigns and in making improvements; but the rough ſketch of human cultivation which is procured, will ſuffice to ſhew the progreſs

of

of knowledge. Before the eſtabliſhment of ſociety, men were either huntſmen or ſhepherds, after which they learnt the value of agriculture as far as concerns the turning up the ground and ſetting a few plants, which they had, from daily obſervations, been led to examine, and to find productive upon the return of the ſeaſons peculiar to each. Agriculture would neceſſarily require a more permanent reſidence than paſturage, in which the flocks were perpetually wandering in ſearch of freſh proviſion; conſequently huts, or tents, were erected in the rudeſt manner poſſible, which were the firſt inventions we read of to ſerve for the purpoſe of houſes. From this period we may date the commencement of ſociety. Men having now laid aſide, in ſome degree, a wandering life, and aſſociated themſelves in one body, were compelled by neceſſity to contrive many inventions, in order to form a bond of union. Hence we

we may trace the origin of our ideas on morality and government. Property was the reſult of labour, exertion, and contrivance in each individual. From property, and ſuperior talent, ſpring the idea of power, and theſe ideas united have given birth to all the paſſions of ambition, envy, pride, malice, &c. As the influence of theſe paſſions upon each individual occaſioned ſerious miſchief, experience proved the neceſſity of laying down certain rules of action, which all conſented to adopt as their guides. Theſe rules in our dealings with each other are called morals, but when digeſted into a regular form, and ſupported by power, they take the name of laws. With the creation of laws, was unavoidably united that of a ruler, or rulers, who ſhould enforce the practice of them, and concentrate the public will in their perſon or perſons. This is government, which comprehends in it more particular ideas than any general principle whatever.

Neither

Neither ſociety or government were, however, the offſpring of any ſudden and inſtinctive principle in man. They grew gradually, like every thing elſe. The union of the ſexes, muſt have produced a connection, which would in the ſame natural manner, increaſe by family alliances; and the junction of families, muſt have rendered it neceſſary to fix their choice upon one, or more to govern them, whoſe age and talents entitled him, or them to the diſtinction. From the aſſociation of men we may fairly expect to find the number of inventions increaſe. Their obſervations would mutually contribute to elucidate, and increaſe each other; and the inventions of different nations are communicated to each other, where they are enlarged, diminiſhed, or altered. Huts became cottages, and cottages houſes, which roſe into ſuperb buildings, in proportion as men had learnt the uſe of metals, the method of making proper utenſils, and of preparing the neceſſary

neceſſary materials. Inſtead of the ſkins of beaſts, ſown together, they would begin to ſpin, and weave the wool of the flocks, from whence they afterwards learnt, by means of curious machines, to manufacture cloth. Whilſt thus endeavouring to increaſe their enjoyments, by the uſeful arts and ſciences, it is natural to ſuppoſe that they would have collected many obſervations, relative to thoſe which produce intellectual pleaſures, ſuch as poetry, muſic, painting, &c. Poetry is the offſpring of a vivid imagination, rouſed by the paſſions, which are always more violent in a ſavage ſtate. War, the reſult of property and power, rouſes in the ignorant an ardent love of diſtinction. Perſonal valour, which is the object of glory, becomes a copious ſubject for a poetic imagination. Poetry will therefore arrive at all the perfection in an uncultivated ſtate, of which it is capable.

Muſic, painting, and ſculpture, require reflection, combination, and judgment; conſequently

conſequently muſt be progreſſively acquired. The eſſays of man in theſe arts were extremely imperfect. Sounds were harſh before they could be made harmonious; many efforts were requiſite, to give the ear an accurate and quick perception of diſcordancies. Painting was equally rude at its commencement: the mixture of colours, and the method of laying them on, were ſo groſs as to be no better than daubing. Among the ancient Britons it was uſual to ſtain their bodies, (with the juices of a herb called Glaſtum or woad), on which were repreſented the figures of different animals. In proportion as cloaths came into uſe, this method of beſmearing their bodies was ſucceeded by an effort of real painting with mixt colours upon their ſhields, as marks of diſtinction.

Amidſt the variety of inventions here mentioned, we have not ſpoken of language, which, in its proper order, might be reckoned among the firſt. As the pleaſures derived from ſociety, will naturally

rally attract men to each other, ſo will the pleaſure of communicating their ideas, lead them to invent ſome common ſigns by which they may bring the ſame images to their minds when abſent. The very nature of language explains the doctrine of aſſociation more clearly than any thing hitherto advanced. There is no natural connection between the words and the things they expreſs. Common conſent affixes a certain ſignification to a number of ſounds, which, by conſtant repetition, becomes ſo habitually aſſociated as never to ſtrike the ear without producing the idea originally affixed. Thus not only our repreſentations of things, but our feelings, are aſſociated with ſounds, as in words which are either modeſt or obſcene, pure or impure, harſh or ſmooth, ſtrong or weak, in which theſe ſeveral impreſſions are produced in uniſon with the image of the thing ſignified.

Improvements in language, have kept pace with men's knowledge in other particulars.

particulars. The number of words increaſed proportionably with the number of ideas, except in thoſe caſes where men, for want of ſome new term, have applied thoſe already uſed to other objects; thus ſometimes a word expreſſing a material idea is applied to a ſpiritual object, which is called a figure, as when, from handling ſome ſubſtance, we ſpeak of handling a ſubject. Theſe figures are infinitely various, and give much brilliancy and vivacity to language.

Language is a ſpecies of muſic which has its harmonies and diſcordancies; as is remarkable in comparing the different languages and the different ſtages of the ſame language, where the diſpoſitions of vowels and conſonants produce either harſh or ſoft ſounds on the ear, and the arrangement of words in a ſentence will, from the ſame cauſe, be either ſmooth or diſcordant. Whoever reads the old Engliſh, in compariſon with the preſent ſtyle, or obſerves the difference between the compoſitions

compoſitions of Blair and thoſe of other writers, will find theſe remarks exemplified.

From the preceding outline of human improvement, it is obvious that all our ideas have been either actual impreſſions from outward objects, or the reſult of thoſe impreſſions which have been produced by accident or neceſſity. If this opinion be not ſufficiently clear, or if its application be not ſuppoſed univerſal, we may add a few obſervations upon the workings of our own minds.

What is more remarkable than the regular chain in which our ideas flow at certain times? If particularly impreſſed with any thing pleaſurable or painful, as the ſucceſs of ſome favorite project, or the death of a much lamented friend, every object around aſſumes an appearance ſuitable to the caſt of our minds. Every thing is either gay and chearful, gloomy and ſad, according to the feelings which predominate within us. No object is ſo remote,

remote, as not to recal the ideas which intereſt us moſt.

Upon reviewing any ſpot where we have received an extraordinary ſhare of happineſs or miſery, every minute particular revives the former impreſſions. We can recal the actions, words, or thoughts which were produced by each individual place or thing. A faithful dog was probably our companion, the ſight of which will preſent us afreſh with the rambles we took together, the ſports we enjoyed together, the manner of our eating and drinking together. Perhaps the ſight of this animal may lead us to retrace all the events, actions, thoughts, and feelings of our childiſh years, from the earlieſt recollection, and it is not improbable but the current of our ideas may revert to every ſucceeding period of our lives. Men in the habits of reflection will, no doubt, have noticed in themſelves the number of little caſualties which have given riſe to a train of the moſt ſerious and important

reflections.

reflections. The fall of a child, and its manner of behaving upon it, may lead an obſerving perſon to conſider the conduct of that child, in relation with that of its mother, which paves the way for examining the conduct of parents in general, and probably ends with nothing leſs than a ſyſtem of education.

What perſon, upon the commencement of any important work, has not expected to find it leſs voluminous than it has proved; and, perhaps, after the firſt arrangement of his plan, is led, by ſome hint thrown out in converſation, or remark accidentally dropped in an unconnected manner, to alter the fundamental principle upon which the whole is built, and to reverſe the order of his ſcheme entirely?

Though the chain of our ideas is not thus regular in common life, the connection is no leſs manifeſt. The tranſitions in converſation are very abrupt, but ſtill every ſubject is evidently the reſult of the

the former, or of ſome freſh incident which has intervened. As converſations are generally upon light and trifling ſubjects, they admit of perpetual changes and windings, according to the vivacity of the ſenſes, which are more alive to catch the ſurrounding objects, and give us food for obſervation. This is the ſtate of all men's minds who are not habituated to ponder ſerious ſubjects for a length of time. In all their tranſactions they are ſubject to vivid and haſty impreſſions, which are quickly obliterated by others equally powerful.

From retracing the links by which all our ideas are thus hung together, we might be led to aſk, whether the differences in human intellect have not their origin in the different impulſes which children may receive at early periods of life? The ſuppoſition of a child's being born with a diſtinctive character, having all its opinions, paſſions, inclinations, and taſtes in embryo; which are only unfolded

by circumſtances, or that the child on its birth ſhould receive ſuch violent impreſſions from external objects as are not to be counteracted by education, are equally contradicted by the well-known changeability of the human character. Extraordinary tranſitions from vice to virtue, and the contrary, have ariſen out of the moſt trivial circumſtances. A rooted habit of drunkenneſs and debauchery has been corrected by an animated diſcourſe, an intereſting tale, or a melancholy example of the fatal effects of ſuch vices. More gradual, but not leſs perfect changes have been wrought upon children, not only in their moral characters, but in their intellectual powers. Prodigality in childhood has ſometimes produced avarice in men, and volatile buoyancy has been converted into gloomy ſedateneſs. Remarkable indications of genius and quickneſs in children have been ſucceeded by dullneſs and ſtupidity, which has originated very probably in diſ-

diſappointed pride. Young people ſoon become ſenſible of their ſuperiority, and build upon this conſciouſneſs to become careleſs and idle in whatever they are required to do or learn. If they do not afterwards ſucceed and retain this ſuperiority, if difficulties ariſe which call for more attention than they have been habituated to give, the taſk becomes too great, and mortification creates diſguſt, which is attended with a total indifference for every thing intellectual. The work is then performed through fear, and not from inclination.

On the contrary, many children have diſcovered remarkable ſymptoms of ſtupidity in early life, and even to an advanced period of manhood, who have afterwards proved diſtinguiſhed characters. The cauſe may be clearly traced from diſappointment in the firſt efforts, in which they had repeatedly failed, and as often been diſcouraged by the ſevere reproofs of their ſuperiors. Want of con-

fidence in their own abilities, is as inimical to exertion in children as an exceſs of confidence; which is fully evinced by the ſpirited manner in which thoſe young people abovementioned, aim at conquering difficulties upon the firſt dawn of ſucceſs, which one fortunate eſſay has given them.

To this cauſe of diſappointment, which deſtroys all intereſt, we may attribute the chief difference in the intellectual powers of man; an evil that might eaſily be remedied by a proper education. It is very fair to ſuppoſe, at leaſt, that if not perfectly eradicated, it might be, in a great degree, diminiſhed. I grant, there are many circumſtances attending the conception and birth of a child which may affect the brain, or the corporeal frame, and produce impreſſions which greatly influence its mental exertion. Slight cauſes, combining with thoſe already mentioned, will ſuffice to ſtamp ſtupidity upon a child. The weakneſſes of human beings

deſcend

deſcend in many caſes from parents to children. The intemperance of one ſex and follies of the other, corrupt the humours and unfit the organ of thinking for the reception of powerful impreſſions. To which may be added, the influence of bad example and bad habits, with which moſt children are aſſailed at an early age, from thoſe whom they are taught to eſteem, and by whoſe will their thoughts and actions are regulated.

The diſcuſſion of the queſtion on the inequality of the human powers, is of no farther uſe than as it enables us ſtill farther to elucidate the nature of the human mind; a ſubject neceſſary to be properly underſtood, before the nature of education can be clearly explained. The fact is obvious, that men are very different in their characters and abilities. The train of ideas in all men cannot poſſibly be the ſame, becauſe the original impreſſions with which others are aſſociated, are widely different in each individual; and

the various circumſtances which concur to retain or divert this train, contribute to increaſe the difference.

It is not my deſire to be tediouſly prolix on the ſubject of aſſociation, but the importance of underſtanding it thoroughly previous to any farther inveſtigation, appeared to be a ſufficient juſtification for this ample manner of diſcuſſion.

SECT. II.

ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE MIND.

THOUGH the mind is nothing more than the concatenation of ideas paſſing over the brain, by means of the general connection ſubſiſting between them, termed aſſociation, yet theſe ideas are produced in various modes, called *powers*.

The firſt faculty is *perception*, by which we

we receive impreſſions through the medium of the ſenſes from external objects.

The ſecond, *compounding*, by which objects are not only perceived, but the different qualities, properties, &c. inherent in them, are noticed; and the relations between the two obſerved.

The third, *compariſon*, by which two or more ideas are united in order to obſerve their relative difference.

The fourth, *analyſis*, by which complex ideas are reduced to their ſimple ſtate by diviſion and ſub-diviſion.

The fifth, *combination*, by which different ideas are united together from ſome common agreement.

The ſixth, *abſtraction*, by which ideas are formed in the mind, independent of the objects they are intended to repreſent.

The ſeventh, *judgement*, by which two or more ideas are united, in order to ob-

ſerve their agreement or difference, and from thence to form a third.

The eighth, *memory*, by which we are enabled to revive old impreſſions with the conſciouſneſs of their having paſſed through the mind before.

The ninth, *reflection*, by which the ſame ideas frequently revolve over the mind.

By theſe operations, and in the order here laid down, we may ſuppoſe that mankind acquired their ideas of things. In the ſame manner ideas ought to be communicated to the infant mind. For every child is in the ſituation of a ſavage, with regard to his mental faculties; but with this difference, that the ſavage has not the advantages of a guide, to fix his attention on thoſe things which will be moſt intelligible, and conſequently moſt intereſting. Nor, indeed, have children hitherto enjoyed this privilege to its fulleſt extent. It will be my endeavour, however, to lay open with as much regularity and

and accuracy as poſſible, the proper commencement and rotation in which every thing ſhould be preſented to the view of the child. For this purpoſe we muſt devote a ſhort time to illuſtrating each operation, after which, we ſhall proceed to make the application to the various ſubjects of a ſchool education.

SECT. III.

ON THE OPERATION OF PERCEPTION.

It might be ſuppoſed ſufficient for the ſenſes to be brought into contact with the ſurrounding objects, in order to receive impreſſions. Experience has, however, proved, that human beings may have the organs of viſion, hearing, feeling, ſmelling, and taſting, in a ſound ſtate, and yet not be ſtruck by the things which after-

wards may affect them. Circumſtances muſt throw them in the way of being directly oppoſed to each other in order to rouſe the attention. From whence the different degrees of obſervation in children, of which we have before ſpoken. The mind once rouſed, becomes daily more alive to making remarks. Thus will two children, with apparently the ſame external advantages, make a widely different improvement of their time. One will have collected and ſtored a vaſt variety of ideas, on the appearances, qualities, properties, actions, &c. of different things, whilſt the other was employing himſelf with ſome trifle, without heeding any thing which paſſed before him. After all, however, the obſervations of every child, with any ſhare of quickneſs, will ſerve but little to enlighten his mind on the nature of things; and, perhaps, by crowding a too great variety of unconnected images together, will produce confuſion and fatigue.

In

In order to form any connection in the mind, it is neceſſary to lay a good foundation, by chooſing thoſe things as objects of attention which are neither too complicated, nor too remote from conſtant notice, that the impreſſions may be forcible, clear, diſtinct, and comprehenſive. The importance of this particular will be eaſily perceived. As one idea is the offspring of another, ſo, if the firſt idea be obſcure, the ſecond, which is neceſſarily connected with the firſt, muſt become more obſcure, and a collection of theſe obſcurities muſt excite perplexity. Although the ideas which we acquire at firſt by perception are mere general outlines, or repreſentations of things, as they ſtrike upon the ſenſes, yet it is equally neceſſary, to render theſe general ideas ſo vivid and diſtinct, that things may not be confounded together which are really different. Thus, in order to form a clear idea of a horſe, or an aſs, it is not neceſſary to examine their peculiar pro-

perties and qualities, nor to conſider their exact proportions in compariſon, but to fix upon the mind the image of the two things ſo ſtrongly, that wherever they are ſeen they may be diſtinguiſhed from one another.

Deſcription is extremely defective for conveying clear ideas to the mind of a child, becauſe language is incapable of painting with accuracy the very general repreſentations which the mind forms of external objects.

The repreſentation of things by pictures is much leſs imperfect than deſcriptions. They uniformly pleaſe and intereſt, and are calculated to convey a clear idea, but after all they can ſerve only as aids. No picture can be ſo perfect as the original. Nor ought we to be contented with barely ſhowing children images on paper. We ought to direct their attention to the objects as they occur in common life. Thus whether we are eating, drinking, talking, walking, reading, or

amuſing

amuſing ourſelves, we ſhall find numberleſs things that deſerve the attention of a child; by which at the ſame time the names of the ſeveral objects may be more ſtrikingly fixed upon its mind. Children generally learn names as an introduction to the knowledge of things. But I would reverſe the order of inſtruction, and if they are ever ſeparated, let a child firſt learn the things, and afterwards their appellations. In complex terms this may be eſſential, but the objects of perception, and their names, may with greater facility be learned together. It may probably be ſaid, that this is already done. True, but not to a proper extent. Children generally learn what their daily neceſſities oblige them to call for; and there are ſome, who will take the trouble to point out other objects to them by their finger, at the ſame time frequently repeating the ſounds, and afterwards making the child do the ſame. This method is very excellent, but it is generally

very

very limited. It appears to me, that an infant ought never to utter any ſounds, the ſignification of which cannot be made as clear as if the thing were preſent; nor a child to ſpell and pronounce what has not been previouſly preſented to his underſtanding. At the ſame time that thoſe objects ought to be as numerous as poſſible, in order to initiate the child into a general acquaintance with things and words; as the ſun, moon, ſtars, animals, birds, beaſts, trees, flowers, herbs, chairs, tables, and all the objects of art and nature which fall within the ſphere of obſervation. In ſhort, nothing ought to be omitted which is connected with the ſucceeding information, whilſt care ſhould be taken to avoid burthening it with comparatively uſeleſs materials. Amongſt the chief of theſe would be ſpiritual terms, the ideas of which have never been produced in the mind of man but by the progreſs of cultivation, nor can ever ariſe without the exercife of all his powers.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

ON THE OPERATION OF COMPOUNDING.

THINGS have hitherto been conſidered as abſtract wholes, in which their moſt prominent features have diſtinguiſhed them from one another in the mind of a child. The next ſtep therefore in the progreſs of receiving ideas is that of compounding two or more in one ſubſtance. By a diſtant attention to theſe particulars, a vaſt variety of words as well as ideas is acquired.

In the firſt place, the qualities, properties, relations, &c. of things, ought to be preſented to the mind in union with the ſubſtances to which they belong. Here a wide field of information is open to the inſtructor and inſtructed. A careful collection muſt be made of all thoſe

ſubſtances

ſubſtances which are the moſt familiar from daily obſervation, as beaſts, birds, houſes, trees, fields, flowers, &c. &c. and in theſe ſubſtances the moſt ſtriking qualities, &c. ſhould be noticed firſt. The material qualities are objects of perception, they of courſe are more intelligible to children, as for example, *a round bowl, a ſweet apple, bitter bread, a thick book, a hard ſtone.* The ideas of *bowl, apple, bread, book,* and *ſtone,* and the qualities or properties *round, ſweet, bitter, thick, hard,* are equally ſenſible, and ſuch as are the moſt likely to affect the ſenſes. In like manner the ſhape and colour of our clothes, of animals, of tables, of chairs, &c. The hardneſs or ſoftneſs of ſtones and metals, the various colours of flowers, the ſweetneſs and ſourneſs of every object which affects the ſenſe of ſmelling, or the loudneſs and lowneſs of ſounds But the nice diſtinction of ſounds into the *harſh, ſhrill, melodious, mellow,* &c. or of ſmells into the *nauſeous, rank, diſ-*

agreeable,

agreeable, &c. or of ſhape and form into the *comely*, the *decent*, and *beautiful*, &c. though all ſenſible ideas, cannot be rendered ſo to a child without a familiar acquaintance with the general diſtinction.

Secondly, the actions, movements, ſtates, and changes of ſubſtances, are another ſpecies of ideas which ſhould be preſented to the mind of a child. They very much reſemble the former, but are much more copious. Every animal has its peculiar mode of uttering ſounds, as *the dog barks, the owl ſcreams, the lamb bleats*, &c. or its peculiar food or way of living, as the *cat eats mice* and *rats, ſheep live upon graſs, birds on ſeeds* and *inſects*, &c. or its peculiar mode of moving, as *birds fly, dogs walk* or *run, fiſhes ſwim, man walks* or *rides*. In like manner with inanimate objects, which act in the ſame variety of ways, and have appropriate appellations. Thus, *the knife cuts, the fire burns, the ſtone breaks, the waters flow, the wind blows, the ſun ſhines, the*

the moon ſhines; all theſe are objects demonſtrable by the ſenſes. But the growing of the fruits, the whiſtling of the winds, the roaring of the waters, the ſhooting of the buds, and the like, are not ſo perfectly clear as to deſerve conſideration in this ſtage of improvement, where no complex ideas, which require an analyſis or elucidation, are introduced. Herein lies the principal defect of moſt elementary works, that they contain a too promiſcuous collection of different ideas and terms, ſimple and complex. The productions of Mrs. Trimmer, Mrs. Barbauld, and Mrs. Godwin, are well fitted for children who have been habituated, not only to perceive and compound, but compare, analyſe, combine, &c. Every book of this kind, though very ſimple by compariſon, does ſtill contain ſome complex, figurative, general, ſpiritual, or abſtract terms, which of courſe muſt be unintelligible to a child. What indeed can be more premature, than to expect a child

child to comprehend a ſentence, including in it many complex terms, before it has underſtood each of theſe terms ſingly? By this method, an infinite variety of names is rendered clear to the mind of a child, at the ſame time that it receives pleaſure and amuſement from the opening dawn of light which expands the intellect.

SECT. V.

OPERATION OF COMPARING.

THIS operation affords us a number of ideas, which are to be acquired by no other means. Of courſe it is of importance for a child to become acquainted with the terms and ſignifications together. It relates to the qualities, properties, &c. of ſubſtances, but not to ſubſtances themſelves. The properties of heighth, depth, length, breadth, motion, quantity, weight, &c.

&c. exiſt in an almoſt infinite variety of degrees in different bodies. Theſe are called relative properties, in diſtinction from the abſolute. The firſt are ſo named, becauſe they cannot exiſt in the mind without a relation to two or more beings, but the ſecond derive their name from their independent exiſtence, without reference to any other thing. A body may be rough or ſmooth, white or red, if no other body exiſted, but a thing cannot be high or low, thick or thin, broad or narrow, ſwift or ſlow, heavy or light, but by compariſon. Nothing is high, unleſs compared with ſomething not ſo high, nor thick, but by uniting it with what is thin. So what is broad may be learnt by putting it with what is narrow. A child would conceive a ſlight aſcent high until he ſaw a high hill. The motion of a bowl on a bowling green is ſwift, compared with that of a ſnail, but ſlow, compared with the motion of a cannon ball. A houſe may be high, compared with a cottage; and

and low, compared with a church ſteeple. By this method of compariſon a child may learn the different degrees of the ſame quality in different objects, from whence they acquire the ſignification of the terms very, extremely, abundantly, ſcarcely, exceedingly, &c. This will naturally lead to the diviſion of length, breadth, depth, &c. into the different parts of feet, yards, inches, &c. which may be eaſily explained after a child has, by ocular demonſtration, learnt the relative properties.

Under this operation might be comprehended many relative terms in common uſe, as, for example, *a mountain, a hill, or hilloc; a man, a youth, a boy, a child, or babe*, &c. &c. A *mountain* is larger than a *hill*, and a *hill*, than a *hilloc*. A *man* is older than a *youth*, a *youth* than a *boy*, a *boy* than a *child*, a *child* than a *babe* or *infant*.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

OPERATION OF ANALYSING.

ANALYSIS is one of the moſt copious operations we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of. In this ſtage of the proceſs, the mind of a child may fairly be expected to have collected ſuch a ſtock of clear ideas and their appropriate terms, that it begins to receive a degree of form and order. A child acquires a command over the general nature of things and their qualities, ſo as to derive amuſement from the contemplation of them; in proportion to the increaſe of his information. The multiplicity of objects in this operation, renders an order and regularity neceſſary. As the ideas to be analyſed are both ſenſible and ſpiritual, the former ſhould be uniformly examined before the latter, for very obvious reaſons.

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As the firſt ſtep, things which have component parts ought to be analyſed. Thus a man may be divided into the head, trunk, and members; under the trunk may be conſidered the breaſt and body; under the head, the cheeks, the noſe, the lips, the ears, and ſcull; and under the members may be comprehended the thighs, legs, feet, and hands; under the hands and feet, the fingers and toes. In other animals no great difference exiſts in the form and conſtruction, but many variations in the names of theſe parts; cats and dogs have paws inſtead of feet, and claws inſtead of fingers. A horſe has a foot with a hoof and nothing like fingers. Inſtead of lips, birds have bills, and thus each animal has ſome peculiarity which receives a different name. The ſame analyſis may be obſerved with regard to inanimate objects. A tree may be divided into the head, trunk, and the foot, which may be again ſub-divided into the roots, the branches, the buds, and leaves. This operation

operation extends in the next place to the diviſion of things according to the different materials of which they are compoſed. A *knife* is compoſed of *wood* and *ſteel*, the *handle* being made of the former, and the *blade* of the latter. A houſe may be compoſed of various materials, according to the different parts which belong to it. A child would therefore firſt divide it into the different parts, as the ſhell, the top, doors, windows, the rooms, the fire places, &c. after which it will eaſily obſerve the materials of each part, as wood, iron, ſtone, brick, mortar, glaſs, &c. &c. The ſame may be ſaid of paper, bread, books, &c. &c. After theſe complex material objects, a child may proceed to analyſe cauſes and effects, which ſhow the influence of one thing upon another, and the conſequences that flow from that influence, from whence the ſignification of many complex terms are explained, which are not directly demonſtrable by the ſenſes. Thus, *ice*, *aſhes*, to *grow*,

grow, to *live*, to *meet*, and many others. Under the name *ice* is comprehended two ideas, firſt of *water*, and ſecondly of *water in a congealed ſtate*, which may be explained by ſaying the froſt hardens many things, particularly *water*, which makes *ice*. The exact proceſs by which water is converted into *ice*, or other effects flow from other cauſes, is a ſubject at preſent beyond the reach of human ſagacity. We muſt content ourſelves, in a great meaſure, with judging from their connection.

Under this article may be comprehended the modes of acting, or of producing effects, relative to time, place, ſituation, &c. Thus *the birds fly with wings in the air*; *fiſhes ſwim in the water*, *horſes run ſwiftly*, &c. &c.

In the order of information we may next conſider the ſignification of ſpiritual terms which muſt be all complex, becauſe they depend upon ſenſible ideas, thus, *dangerous*, *to hurt*, *to ſuppoſe*, *to refuſe*, *to*

determine, to approve, to condemn, &c. &c. Now let us analyſe the words *dangerous* and *ſuppoſe*, in order to ſhew the ſteps by which a juſt idea of theſe words are formed. The idea of *danger* comprehends firſt the idea of pain, and afterwards the probability of producing that pain. Under the idea of *ſuppoſe* is comprehended firſt the general nature of thinking, and afterwards the particular thought expreſſed by the term. It is not here ſuppoſed that a child, at ſo early a period, can take a comprehenſive view, either of his own feelings, or the operations of his own mind, nor is that accuracy neceſſary to preſerve the chain of inſtruction. But ſtill it is eſſentially neceſſary to acquire ſome degree of information, in order to avoid obſcurity. The idea of *pain* is demonſtrable by the ſenſe of feeling, and it is eaſy to make this familiar to a child, by recalling its own ſenſations upon receiving any accident. And by the ſame method the idea of an *idea* may be illuſtrated. After which

which the complex ideas of *danger* and *ſuppoſe* may be rendered equally familiar; as the ſteps in both caſes are gradual and eaſy. Thus ſhould all words be analyſed which are recurring in almoſt every ſentence we write or ſpeak. The method may appear tedious, but experience evinces that no child will conſider that as tedious which is clear to his underſtanding. Nor ought the removal of difficulties to be regarded as an irkſome taſk, if it ſerve to render the attainment of knowledge not only tolerable but delightful. It ought likewiſe conſtantly to be kept in view, that all our ideas are bound together by a chain which cannot be broken, and if one obſcurity obtrudes itſelf on the mind, it will always produce others.

After the analyſis of ſpiritual ideas and terms, we muſt proceed to that of figurative terms. As a figure of ſpeech is founded upon ſome analogy between two objects, it will be neceſſary only to point out theſe analogies, in order to render

them intelligible, beginning firſt with the analogies between material objects, and from thence to the ſpiritual. Thus when a child underſtands the meaning of the word *foot*, as applicable to an *animal*, he will form an idea of it when applied to a *tree*. As the ſituation at the bottom is the ſame, and the uſe in ſupporting the body is ſimilar. So likewiſe from *handling* a ſubſtance, a child may learn the nature of *handling* a *ſubject*. After all, however, the ſubject of figures is very abſtruſe, and ought not to be multiplied in the works intended for children. There is another claſs of ideas and terms which will deſerve an analyſis, after a child has been made familiar with all the former. Theſe are abſtract ideas and terms. The operation itſelf of abſtraction is the moſt remote from ſenſe, and conſequently the moſt unintelligible to a child. The word abſtraction expreſſes the ſeparating of qualities from the ſubſtances to which they belong, and making them diſtinct ſubſtances

ſtances themſelves. Thus *ſimilitude*, *contrariety*, *cauſe*, *effect*, are but modes of things, for they have no real exiſtence independant of the objects to which they belong, but the mind conceives them as ſuch at certain times. It would be very difficult, and indeed almoſt impoſſible to explain this fully to a child. Nothing more therefore is neceſſary, but to ſhow the relations which exiſt between things, expreſſed by the terms *cauſe*, *effect*, *likeneſs*, &c. and habit, united with reflection and increaſing information, will lead him to conſider them ſeparately. The nature of theſe abſtract terms, will be more minutely explained in the ſtudy of language of which we ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

SECT. VII.

OPERATION OF COMBINING.

By the operation of combining, general ideas and terms are formed from the analogies in a number of individual objects. This is one of the moſt important operations which the mind performs. It requires great attention, and a conſiderable familiarity with things, and the modes of their exiſtence. A child muſt firſt be ſhewn, by th e operation of analyſis, the general ideas which had been already formed of the animal and vegetable part of the world, by which he will acquire a number of ideas, and be able to take a larger ſurvey of the ſurrounding objects. Suppoſe the word animal be analyſed; it may be defined as a thing which has life, and may be explained by appropriate examples. A thing that has life moves

of

of itſelf, as *you*, pointing to the child, when you play and run about; or as the *horſe*, the *lamb*, the *calf*, &c. but a thing without life moves only by the aſſiſtance of ſomething elſe.

Under the general rank of animals may be included birds, beaſts, fiſhes, inſects, and men. *Birds* are divided into *wild* and *tame*; under the *tame*, the *hen*, *duck*, *gooſe*, *turkey*, &c. and under the *wild*, the *lark*, *pheaſant*, *partridge*, &c. The claſs of beaſts comprehends *horſes*, *cows*, *ſheep*, and all quadrupeds. That of *fiſhes*, the *cod*, *ſalmon*, *trout*, and whatever lives in the water. And under the *men* may be comprehended human beings of a particular form, with the powers of thinking and acting for themſelves, which may be claſſed under different names, according to their country, climate, opinions, character, &c.

The ſame analyſis might be made of all inanimate objects, and from thence of all knowledge, all arts, ſciences, &c. An order is however neceſſary to be preſerved in conveying this information.

It comprehends the principal part of ſcience. It requires an extenſive knowledge of things, and all their qualities, properties, parts, materials, cauſes, effects, &c. As therefore a child may not be fully acquainted with all theſe ſubjects at once, it may be proper, in claſſing the different objects, not to mention the ſpecies or individuals in each claſs, nor to point out minutely the marks by which each is diſtinguiſhed. General ideas may ſuffice, to pave the way for a more minute inveſtigation, in which every particular would then ſucceſſively become a ſubject of conſideration.

For want of this operation the greateſt errors are committed by the learned and unlearned. Men ſeldom think of arranging their ideas, or including them under general heads. From hence diſtinctions are made without a difference, and real differences are left undiſtinguiſhed.

This ſubject will admit of farther conſideration in another place.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

OPERATION OF JUDGING.

AFTER the operations of perceiving, compounding, comparing, analyſing, and combining, there is ſtill much left for the judgment.

The judgment enables us to deduce what is unknown from what is known. There is no period of time in which this operation may not be of uſe to us, but particularly in childhood, when ſo wide a ſphere of information lies before us, the proſpect of which expands with the attainment of the object. Every day and hour preſents us with ſomething we have not ſeen before, and calls our attention to ſome freſh and intereſting ſubject.

With ſo much knowledge obtained, and ſo much to obtain, the operation of obſerving the connections between the two becomes of peculiar uſe and importance.

There are many familiar ſubjects upon which a child may form concluſions, that will ſerve as an introduction to others of more ſerious import. As firſt, relative to the uſes and cauſes of many objects which may not have been the ſubject of his previous obſervation.

Suppoſe a child ſee an apple under a tree, it may conclude, if it have previouſly learnt where apples grow, that it has either been beaten or blown down. If it ſee a bird fall down dead, it may conclude, that it has either been ſhot, or received ſome injury from another bird. If a dog walk lame, it will conclude, having ſeen him walk otherwiſe before, that he has hurt his foot. Upon viewing a grate, he might diſcover its uſe, from having ſeen fire in a pan, or a few pieces of

of brick, and comparing the form and ſtructure of the two. In like manner he might judge of the uſe of a binding to a book, or cloathing for the body. Without the uſe of this operation he might fall into the error of ſuppoſing, that the covering for the animate and inanimate ſubſtance ſerved for the ſame purpoſe. Whereas on the contrary, ſince the inanimate ſubſtance cannot feel, he will inſtantly conclude, that leather is a harder ſubſtance than paper, and therefore is placed on the book as a preſervative. Thus he might diſcover the effects of things, as well as their cauſes; knowing that fire will burn wood, he will naturally conclude, that it will burn paper and ſtraw. So if a child knew that glaſs was fragible, he would naturally conclude, that ſo hard a ſubſtance as a ſtone would break it. When he ſees a piece of wood ſink in water, he will naturally conclude, that a ſtone, which is much heavier than a piece of wood, will certainly ſink ſooner.

He may afterwards proceed to judge of the moral qualities of animals, having been taught to notice himſelf, to obſerve the nature of his feelings, and the progreſs of his own thoughts, he will probably underſtand the nature of *fear*; from whence, upon obſerving the indications of it in ſheep or birds, he will naturally conclude that they are *timorous* animals. From theſe a child may, in courſe of time, proceed to the moral characters of men; but this ſubject is extremely complex, and requires a long and continued inſtruction, and a familiar acquaintance with moſt other branches of knowledge in common life, before it can be ſtudied with advantage.

The minds of children diſcover a ſtriking difference on this point. Some are much more acute in drawing deductions in their own minds than others. Some perceive the connexions between things almoſt inſtantaneouſly, whilſt others are incapable of forming ideas from any operation

ration but perception, and from that with difficulty. I here refer only to their judgements on very ſimple and familiar ſubjects. For, in general, the operation of judging, as before obſerved, forms no part of a child's education. It is ſufficient if a boy of ſixteen can be prevented from doing or receiving miſchief by the influence of his parent or tutor. The reaſon for this is obvious. Children are never taught to think. They are taught that their ſuperiors, and all who love them, will think for them until the time appointed by law, when they are to begin to think for themſelves. What an abſurdity! as if thinking were the mere work of a day. That it were as eaſy to think as to receive a fortune. Sad experience will convince every individual of the falſity of this opinion. What ſecurity is there in the conduct of a youth thus unprepared to meet the allurements and incentives of the world? His virtues are the offſpring of obedience and imitation. For want of a

good

good foundation, they are eaſily deſtroyed by the perſuaſion and ridicule of thoſe already initiated into vicious practices, or by the combination of circumſtances which offer a temptation. We commonly obſerve the prejudices of men overpowered by paſſion in their youth, for which they ſatisfy themſelves with a repentance in old age, when incentive to vice no longer exiſts. The perſuaſion in children that they have not the power of forming a judgement, is quite ſufficient to prevent them from trying. It would be poſſible to convince a child at an early period of life, that it was not able to walk, and we ſhould never ſee it make the effort. An effort, however, in infancy, at forming concluſions upon the preſent ſyſtem of education, would be contradictory. A child has no ideas, or if he have, none that are combined or arranged, and conſequently he connot deduce ideas from what does not exiſt. It is equally impoſſible for him, without a guide, to collect,

and

and arrange ideas which have been the result of many years gradual reflection from different individuals. Suppose, for example, a child were asked to form the conclusion relative to the stone. It is necessary first to know the general nature of weight, after which he may have observed that something lighter than a stone has sunk in the water, and will then be enabled to conclude from the idea of greater weight, that it must sink sooner. If he have not the idea of weight, or of sinking in water, he cannot draw a conclusion upon the stone's sinking. An application of this opinion may be made to the most complex, and abstruse subjects which the human mind has ever formed, in which not only three, but three thousand ideas, may be collected and digested into simple and compound propositions; in which each member is connected with the other, and every period flows from the former.

The value of this operation, with regard to the sciences and morals, will be a sub-

ject

ject of future conſideration; but its utility in aiding the memory, will be examined in the ſucceeding ſection.

SECT. IX.

OPERATION OF THE MEMORY.

THIS is the only operation which is ever exerciſed in young people of any age. From the firſt commencement of a child's learning to ſpell, the principal attention is given to rendering it perfect in that particular, with little or no regard to whether the child affix a right or a wrong, or any ſignification at all, to the words he ſpells. If he collect any ſcattered information from time to time, as opportunity offers, it is more the effect of accident than deſign. A quickneſs in ſpelling is the ſureſt road to honor and reward. All his talent is concentrated towards the point of uttering ſimple, and com-

complex ſounds, and afterwards pronouncing words audibly and in ſucceſſion, which is honoured with the name of *reading*. If the ſame unmeaning ſounds be committed to memory, the tone of voice peculiar to each word expreſſly pointed out, frequently repeated, forcibly impreſſed, and then ſpoken in imitation of acting, this is called *elocution*. Before we proceed farther, let us only conſider the tedious and laborious taſk, which this mode impoſes. How much repetition, what continued efforts, and unremitting application is requiſite, both from maſter and ſcholar, in order to make a feeble, and after all, tranſitory impreſſion! We can view this, and even remember the ſenſeleſs drudgery which all learning appeared to us, and yet wonder at the diſguſt of young people to their buſineſs in ſchool. Their feelings upon this occaſion may in a great meaſure reſemble thoſe of the bears, monkies, or birds, who are by dint of beating only, taught to dance or perform their tricks. They certainly know what

what they are obliged to do; and content themſelves with the bare performance of their taſk. What is more common than for children to be much pleaſed with the commencement of ſpelling, who, afterwards, upon perceiving its obſcurity, expreſs the greateſt averſion towards it, and a decided preference to every thing elſe?

The memory in this caſe is perfectly unaided. Sounds have no connection with each other, except in the ſyſtem of muſic. One unmeaning word will never recall another. One leſſon learnt will never facilitate the attainment of a ſecond. We might therefore ſpend our whole lives in collecting and repeating ſounds, which would quickly paſs away. Ideas, on the other hand, are bound together by a perpetual aſſociation; and every operation by which we acquire them, ſerves to lighten the burthen of recollecting, and to diminiſh the objects of memory. Sounds and ideas are connected together, therefore, by the operation of perceiving, the names, and the things they expreſs mutually recall each other.

other. By the operations of compounding, comparing, and analyſing, the connection between modes and ſubſtances, between ſubſtances and their parts, cauſes, effects, &c. is unfolded, and the ideas we have of them are perpetually revived by the recollection.

The operation of combining gives us general ideas inſtead of the particulars included under them as the ſubjects of remembrance. The operation of judging affords us a vaſt variety of ideas which are never remembered, and need not be retained.

Moreover, the memory is aided, not only in recalling but receiving impreſſions. Habit will ſupply the place of learning by rote. The ſpelling and names of things, which muſt be firſt acquired mechanically, may afterwards be made familiar by other exerciſes. The conſtant recurrence of the ſame objects, in performing the operations before mentioned, cannot fail of making a more ſolid, and indelible impreſſion, than the

the mechanical mode of committing to memory could ever effect.

What has been hitherto ſaid upon the exerciſe of memory, is ſtrikingly elucidated as we proceed to examine the progreſs of a common ſchool education.

From the ſpelling-book, a boy proceeds to Entick's Dictionary, which contains the words arranged alphabetically, in which order he learns a number every day.

The arrangement, in the firſt place, is totally irrelevant to the nature of things. For every letter contains ſimple, complex, material, ſpiritual, and abſtract terms.

The definitions, if ſo they may be called, are totally unfitted to explain the powers of ſpeech, or render thoſe words intelligible, which every book contains. Terms, ſynonymous in their general ſignification, but totally different in their particular application, are claſſed under one another. Thus, for example, in Entick's or any other Dictionary, we ſhall find under the word CUSTOM, *habit*, *faſhion*, *uſage*, *uſe*, *way*. Now, in the firſt place,

place, theſe words are generally as unintelligible as that they are intended to explain. Beſides that, their real ſignifications are ſo remote from each other, that it would be falſe to form any analogy between them. This will appear evident from an explanation of each word.

Habit applies to the repeated actions of individuals, and the influence that repetition has on the mind.

Cuſtom, refers to the regularly repeated actions of nations, or bodies of people, as, *it is a cuſtom among the Indians for women to burn themſelves upon the funeral piles of their huſbands.*

Faſhion, expreſſes the mere tranſitory modes of acting, begun and changed from caprice. *Cuſtom* or *habit*, and *faſhion*, aſſociate, therefore, two oppoſite ideas of *durability* and *changeability*.

Moreover, if words be defined by a ſentence, it is very common for one, two, or three, of theſe words, to be unintelligible; in conſequence of which, the whole ſentence becomes ſo. Suppoſe the word

word CYNIC, *a ſnarling philoſopher*. A boy cannot underſtand the word *ſnarling*, becauſe it is a figurative expreſſion; and much leſs *philoſopher*, which has a complex ſignification, of being not only a man, but a particular man, diſtinguiſhed by his opinions. Now is it poſſible that a child ſhould take any intereſt in what is ſo foreign to his nature? So far from giving an attention to what he might underſtand, is it not natural for him to loath the ſight of a book and all its ſenſeleſs contents? With an unbiaſſed mind let us examine the effect which things have upon ourſelves. Are we not diſguſted with reading any book in a foreign language which we do not thoroughly underſtand; and with what delight do we obſerve the progreſs in ourſelves, and the increaſing clearneſs with which it appears to us? If we, then, who are aſſiſted by our previous knowledge of the ſubject, and the ſenſe of the ſentence, can feel this ennui at difficulties, what muſt it be for a child who has none of

theſe aids, who is in a wilderneſs from beginning to end, who has no previous knowledge to deduce from? It muſt be what it is; inſipid. And if we allo wourſelves a moment's reflection, we muſt perceive, that it is the conſtitution of our nature which makes it ſo. I cannot help recalling the obſervation before made, that thinking is as natural to man as eating and drinking. But he cannot think without ideas. Some defect therefore muſt exiſt in the organs of thinking in children, or in the mode of conveying ideas. From an examination of this mode, as it now exiſts, I am inclined to conceive a deficiency in the latter to be the principal cauſe. And, as a further proof of what I have advanced, obſerve the eagerneſs with which children will liſten to thoſe who explain things as they proceed. And it is remarkable likewiſe, that whatever children learn this way makes ſo durable an impreſſion, that they never forget it, but will be able to recommence a ſecond or third converſation, from the exact point

at

at which they ended. If a child have aſked a queſtion for which he has received no anſwer, he will be ſure to repeat it the next opportunity, with probably two or three more in a ſtring, any of which, if left unanſwered, he will not fail to recollect.

The judgment, and memory, are the two moſt valuable operations which we perform. The memory is the ſtore-houſe of our knowledge, to which the judgment is perpetually adding by deductions from what exiſts. All other operations would be fruitleſs without the latter. Our compounding, comparing, analyſing, and combining, would be of no uſe, unleſs we could retain the impreſſions, and be conſcious that they have before exiſted in our minds. Our enjoyments would be tranſitory, and our lives inſipid. In fact we may ſay that all the other operations depend for their exiſtence upon this one alone. The brain will admit of but a ſingle impreſſion at the ſame point of time, ſo that if we have an idea of a ſubſtance, we cannot

not unite its quality by any other means, than an inſtantaneous ſucceſſion from one to the other. If therefore we had no faculty of retaining ideas, we ſhould never be able to obſerve their connection; becauſe the exiſtence of each would be only momentary, which to a certain extent is the caſe with the brutes. The judgment muſt of courſe, as being the moſt complex operation, depend upon the memory, but it will likewiſe greatly aid it, and leſſen the number of its objects. As it is the nature of the judgment to deduce what is unknown from what is known, a child is not obliged to commit every individual object to memory, in order to know to what it belongs, or what are its cauſes, effects, qualities, and the like, but having formed general analogies, he is enabled, by the operation of the judgment, to claſs the individuals under each analogy, without any previous knowledge of the object. Thus for example, having formed the general analogy of *birds*, it is not neceſſary

nor would it be poſſible, to collect all the ſpecies or individuals comprehended under the general idea; but whenever any animal of that kind preſents itſelf, he firſt conſiders the analogy, then the application of that analogy to a particular object, and afterwards, the concluſion of its being or not being of this or that particular claſs; by which means the mind may be perpetually occupied in increaſing the ſtock of its ideas, without any extraordinary exertion, and the memory may be improved without any burthenſome effort to impreſs upon it objects prematurely preſented. Difficulties would then vaniſh inſenſibly from the child's underſtanding. The pleaſures of cultivation, and increaſing knowledge would be enjoyed, without alloy. And time, which now hangs heavily on the hands of children, would perpetually have its employment in amuſing ſtudy, or chearful recreation.

SECT.

SECT. X.

OPERATION OF REFLECTION.

THERE are but two general ſources of error in the world; the want of knowledge, and the want of reflection. In the preceding ſections I have endeavoured to point out the moſt effectual method of correcting the former defect, the preſent will be devoted to conſider the beſt means of rectifying the latter. The attainment of the firſt is a great ſtep towards that of the ſecond. As underſtanding a ſubject produces pleaſure, ſo does this pleaſure excite an intereſt and thirſt after information, which is never unaccompained by attention and reflection. To this end however it is not only neceſſary to convey ideas to a child, in the order here laid down, by actual in-

ſtruction, but to require of him to do the ſame for himſelf. Suppoſe a child has been taught to compound the ſubſtances of *gold*, *ſilver*, or *horſes*, with their qualities, properties, actions, and changes; he may try to compound the ſubſtances of *graſs*, *birds*, *cabbages*, &c. with their peculiar properties, qualities, actions, and changes. A child will firſt be ſhewn how to compare a *houſe* with a *ſteeple*; a *cloſet* with a *dining room*; a *duodecimo* with a *folio*; from whence he will be led to compare a *houſe* of four ſtories with a *cottage* of one ſtory; or a *field* with a *garden*, &c. From firſt analyſing a *houſe*, a *table*, or a *knife*, to him, he will be enabled to perform the analyſis of a *chair*, a *book*, a *coat*, &c. or from finding the general analogy in *horſes*, or *cows*, *ſheep*, &c. he will be able to diſcover the analogy in books, *chairs*, *larks*, *goats*, &c. So by firſt forming plain and ſimple deductions from the moſt familiar ſubjects, he will perceive the

the method of arranging his ideas, and may give ſpecimens of his own ability in judging. Thus, in every operation, and in every ſtep of that operation, which preſents any thing new, the teacher ſhould always preface every exerciſe with the removal of every difficulty, which the child's previous knowledge will not enable him to remove for himſelf.

The next ſtep to excite attention and give a habit of reflection, is to modify and vary the order of inſtruction. This gives vigour and extenſion to the operations of thought, by inceſſant practice and comprehenſive views. Thus, in the operation of perception, a child ſhould be obliged to point out the *things* by their *names*, and the *names* by the *things* they repreſent, in order to render both equally familiar.

In compounding, a child will probably begin with one particular object, and trace the prominent properties, qualities, actions, and changes, of that object.

But if he were aſked to point out any one of theſe qualities in another object, he would be at a loſs. Therefore he ought to take ſome particular quality, action, or change, and trace the number of ſubſtances to which it belongs. Thus for example, having compounded the ſubſtances of *birds*, *beaſts*, &c. with their peculiar properties, let him take the property of *colour*, as *yellow*, and collect the ſubſtances, ſuch as *gold*, *ſaffron*, &c. to which this colour belongs.

In comparing ſmall things with large, or narrow things with wide, it is probable, that unleſs his attention were immediately directed, he would not think of comparing large things with ſmall, or wide things with narrow.

In analyſing, much variety may be adopted in the mode of exerciſe. In ſpeaking of a houſe, he begins generally with the *ſhell*, and proceeds from thence to the *rooms*, *windows*, *doors*, &c. He ſhould afterwards begin with the different parts

parts of a *room*; and from thence to the *rooms* themſelves, the *ſhell*, &c. Or he might take a houſe in any given part, and proceed to an analyſis in both directions. So likewiſe he might take the ſame parts of different objects, as the *head*, *foot*, &c. in animals, and collect them together, with their peculiar names.

Combination affords a ſtill greater variety than the former. Things will admit of being claſſed according to many different analogies; animals may be claſſed according to their mode of living, whether in the *ſea*, or upon *land*; whether they *eat fleſh*, or *herbs*; which would divide them into *men*, *beaſts*, *birds*, and *fiſhes*. As this is the ſimpleſt and moſt general analogy, it ſhould be the firſt taught; after which a child may be required to ſelect them according to their diſpoſition, into *wild* and *tame*, which diviſion comprehends all the former claſſes. In the former arrangement therefore this analogy, in the diſpoſition, forms a ſubdiviſion. For every animal, from man to the loweſt inſect,

has a diſpoſition. Animals might again, for the ſake of exerciſe, be divided according to their form and colour; which would the more completely enable the child to learn the peculiar properties, &c. of each, in orderthat he might take a comprehenſive view of nature, and every object, with all its qualities, changes, parts, analogies, cauſes, effects, &c. A mind thus ſtored with clear, diſtinct, and comprehenſive ideas, will be well fitted to form concluſions. The judgment is itſelf an exerciſe. It admits of no regularity, becauſe it ſerves to collect the ſcattered information which is not acquired by the preceding operations.

The memory muſt, during theſe efforts, have received almoſt its full ſhare of exertion. The child is obliged to uſe the faculty of recalling, upon a thouſand occaſions, in order to aſſiſt the operations of analyſing, combining, and judging. So that the neceſſity of learning by rote is almoſt entirely removed, except in the com-

commencement, where the names of things are not probably acquired with ſufficient quickneſs. Afterwards, from the other exerciſes, the mind grows perfectly familiar with theſe names as well as every other. The ſame remark applies to ſpelling; the difficulty of which originates in one of the greateſt defects in the Engliſh language; namely, the very great difference between the compoſition of the words, and their pronunciation. If no letters, or even ſyllables, were uſed but what were ſounded, it would be impoſſible for a child, who was made acquainted with each diſtinct ſound, not to learn the complex ſounds.

On the operation of memory I cannot conclude without ſubjoining ſome few remarks. A particular routine of committing any thing to the memory is as imperfect as can poſſibly be conceived. In human life, objects are not preſented to our minds in any particular order. In reading books, objects are not ſeverally

laid down according to their natural ſucceſſion, but promiſcuouſly ariſe, as the ſubject requires. What then more abſurd than for a child's memory to be aided by any particular ſucceſſion of words, or by any particular book, or place in a book? The futility of this plan is evinced by numerous examples of young people, who have, perhaps, learnt a whole book ſo perfectly by rote, that they could repeat the ideas in their own minds quicker than they could utter the words, and yet were completely at a loſs to utter a ſyllable out of the order in which they have been accuſtomed to learn it; and much leſs to remember a ſingle word, when found in another book.

In order to remedy this evil, a child, after having learnt the names of things in his own book, ſhould firſt repeat them as he has learnt them, and afterwards, in a gradual manner, entirely out of this order, until he can ſay the laſt, middle, or firſt word, with the ſame facility, unconnected

connected with any other word preceding or following. His leſſon, thus familiar to him in his own book, ſhould become perfectly ſo where ever he ſees it, by his being obliged to recall it to his recollection in any other book, or at any other time.

The preceding obſervations apply, more or leſs, to children of all capacities; but before I cloſe this Section I muſt make a few particular remarks relative to the treatment of different children.

There are three degrees in the capacities of children deſerving of notice. Some boys retain with very little labour; but the retention is not durable.

Some require great labour, in order to impreſs any thing on their minds; but their retention is very durable.

Some, on the other hand, require no immoderate ſhare of labour, and yet retain what they learn to a very great length of time. This is the higheſt ſtate of perfection at which this faculty is known to

reach. The two extremes are defective, and muſt be corrected by different means.

A quick and tranſient memory is generally attended with quick talents of perceiving, combining, &c. Of courſe whatever paſſes through the mind does not require to be frequently recalled, in order to be underſtood, and conſequently muſt make a very ſlight impreſſion, which is no ſooner made than it is effaced by the number of different objects, conſtantly ſucceeding in minds ſo volatile and fugitive.

On the contrary, a difficulty of retention is generally aſſociated with a dullneſs of apprehenſion, which requires an inceſſant revolving of the ſame images over the mind, in order to give them a deep impreſſion. The frequency of repetition, united with the few impreſſions of a different kind to draw off the attention of ſuch a learner, enable him to commit to memory perfectly, and to retain very long.

To

To fix the attention of the firſt deſcription is the principal ſtep towards rendering it durable, and to give a quickneſs of thought to the other by different methods of exerciſe, is the beſt ſtep towards making him quick at recollection.

Though attention muſt unavoidably reſult from an intereſt in knowledge, yet the principal difficulty lies in rouſing the attention ſufficiently to acquire this intereſt. The volatility inſeparable from children of this deſcription prevents them from attending to what their cool, unbiaſſed judgements afterwards approve. Such is the unfortunate conſtitution of human nature, that it too frequently deſires to do what is inimical to its intereſt, or refuſes to perform what would contribute to its future welfare. Hence the neceſſity for coercion and inſtilling into the mind the foreign motives of hope and fear, to induce people to conſult their own intereſt.

Memory

Memory and attention are not only improveable by habit, but they are the effects of the will. A boy who has sufficient motive for remembering, never forgets. If, therefore, inattention were treated as a ſerious error, and puniſhed with as much rigor as any other fault, it would not be ſo common; boys would be careful to fix upon their minds the neceſſity of being able to repeat what has been once told them. "I forgot," in a boy, ought to be as corrigible as "I did not think;" for a perſon would ſeldom forget any thing, if he were to reflect and repeatedly revolve in his mind the ſubject of remembrance. Children are frequently unconſcious of the ſounds which ſtrike their ears; and what they might, perhaps, underſtand, is completely loſt for want of bending their thoughts to it for a moment. This inattention diſcovers itſelf by crooked and ridiculous miſtakes of one thing for another, or by anſwers irrelevant to the queſtion; and whenever

whenever it be obſerved, it ought to be repreſſed by conſiderable ſeverity. At the ſame time care ſhould be taken to avoid imputing that to careleſſneſs which may be the reſult of ignorance, or of an unavoidable overſight. Perhaps ſome difficulty may have crept into the mind of the child unperceived by the teacher, or the matter may not have been explained with ſufficient clearneſs, or the exerciſes not been repeated ſufficiently often to make a durable impreſſion. All theſe circumſtances merit the ſerious attention of the teacher, before he inflict any puniſhment on the ſuppoſed offender. Puniſhment, under all circumſtances, is calculated to rouſe very painful impreſſions, but when inflicted without deſert, it excites indignation, and, in ſome, diſguſt, or a mental enervation. Many a fine mind has been overwhelmed by injudicious correction.

In the next place, a quickneſs of thought will produce a quickneſs of recollection.

Children

Children with dull capacities require a gentle, patient, and cautious guidance. The exertions ought at firſt to be ſo eaſy as to enſure ſucceſs. If a child could learn no more than one word, no more ought to be given him; for one ſucceſsful effort is certain of giving him a proper confidence in his own abilities, and of inſpiring him with a ſpirit of exertion. This ſpirit, once rouſed, may be kept alive by the ſame gradual and cautious ſteps, and from one word he may proceed to two, three, or four, until, from a ſimple operation, he may be allured to the moſt complex ſubjects, in which more frequent repetitions, and different repreſentations, muſt be made, to render it intelligible. This plan is practicable even with ſome who are grown up, but with children will always be ſo. There are boys, however, whoſe caſe ſeems to be out of the reach of cure.

I ſhall now proceed to conſider the different modes in which theſe exer-

ciſes

ciſes can be purſued with the greateſt advantage.

SECT. XI.

DIFFERENT MODES OF EXERCISING THE POWERS.

A STRICT regularity is neceſſary for young people, in acquiring ideas, though none ought to be preſerved in the mode of recalling them. No premature exertion ought to be given them, in the operations of analyſis or combination, before they have acquired a ſufficient familiarity with the materials which compoſe them.

The exerciſe of the powers will equally require a degree of regularity according to the diſpoſition, improvement, and correſponding circumſtances of the youth.

Theſe exerciſes may be of three kinds, either by writing, if children ſhould have learnt

learnt to write at ſo early an age as this is ſuppoſed to be; by repetition and examination after preparation, or by examination without preparation.

Writing exerciſes is the firſt and introductory ſtep to practice for young people. It affords an opportunity for cool and undiſturbed reflection, in which the mind may revolve the ſame matter frequently; and, by ſo doing, may remove many obſcurities. It enables a child to recall his knowledge without moleſtation or fear; and when he is at a loſs, to refreſh his memory by a reference to his book or rule.

This method is neceſſary to give children habits of accuracy, attention, and application; and is generally as amuſing as any ſchool buſineſs. Since it allows of ſo much time and opportunity for removing difficulties, no miſtakes ought to be permitted. At leaſt, none which diſcover a ſuperficial obſervation, or want of reflection.

The

The utility of this mode with regard to compoſition, will be conſidered in future.

Repetitions and examinations of what has been prepared, is the next ſtep to render a child familiar with what he knows. This ſtep has the advantage of impreſſing more forcibly upon the mind, whatever has been learnt. A child muſt have many fears and apprehenſions to combat, and conſequently feel himſelf obliged to be extremely perfect in what he profeſſes to repeat. It likewiſe affords an opportunity for the teacher to clear up all doubts, obſcurities, and miſunderſtandings, into which he may have fallen. And, when young people do diſcover the leaſt attachment to, or intereſt in knowledge, it ought to be encouraged by the willingneſs and complacency with which the teacher ſatisfies their enquiries.

In repetitions and examinations of this deſcription, the ſcholar ought not to have ſo difficult a taſk impoſed upon him as in writing.

writing. The ſtate of mind in which he repeats it, and the want of all aſſiſtance during the repetition, muſt render it much more difficult to go over an exerciſe before the teacher, than to write it down by himſelf. Perhaps, with ſome diſpoſitions, it may be better to permit them to write it before they repeat it. Repetition in the order ought of courſe to precede examination, which ſhould, in this caſe, be perfectly irregular. The queſtions ſhould be put without regard to time, place, or circumſtances, and no ſtudy allowed for the anſwers.

The next ſtep is unprepared recapitulation and examination of what has already been learnt.—Recapitulations ought to be frequently made, and at ſtated periods of every week, fortnight, or month; the leſſons which have been learnt ought to be retraced in the order in which they were learnt. The regular ſucceſſion in this caſe is neceſſary to counteract the difficulty of an unprepared recollection; as con-

connection will ſerve as a guide for the memory. Afterwards, queſtions (which generally conſtitute examinations) ſhould be put on each leſſon in order; from which, deviations might be made by gradual ſteps.

A queſtion may comprehend only the two operations of perception and recollection; as, when a child is aſked the name of any object; or it may comprehend all the powers of compounding, comparing, analyſing, and judging. As children, according to the preſent mode of education, uſe none of theſe powers, the queſtions put to them, muſt partake of the general ſuperficiality which runs through the whole ſyſtem. They generally comprehend a few ſimple facts, arranged exactly according to the method in which they have been prepared, without any attempt to depart a ſingle word from the routine.

On the other hand, general examinations ſhould admit of ſuch deviations as, by

by degrees, to extend to any leſſon or any part of a leſſon; at the ſame time obſerving to modify the queſtions to the capacities and circumſtances of the ſcholar.

Croſs-queſtions are likewiſe very beneficial in general examinations. Under this ſpecies of queſtions are comprehended thoſe, which are not only put out of order, but likewiſe varied in their form; where, probably, the ſame or a ſimilar anſwer is required to different words. Suppoſe, for example, a child ſhould be aſked, "What is that tall creature which has four legs and a flowing mane?" or, "Is there any animal which is remarkably large and runs quicker than others?" Though *a horſe* is the anſwer to both the queſtions, yet they involve the ſcholar in the recollection of the qualities and the diſtinguiſhing marks which he has been accuſtomed to compound, before he can give a proper anſwer. In this reſpect, theſe examinations differ very much from the

the uſual mode of exerciſing, in which the queſtions are generally worded ſo as to involve anſwers exactly in the words of the author from whom they learn.

The utility of theſe examinations is very obvious, in rendering boys perfect in what they have learnt, and in giving them a quickneſs of thought, and a capacious mind. Upon this plan we muſt think, muſt obſerve, and pay the ſtricteſt attention. It is to be hoped, that reflection and ſteadineſs of mind would be perfectly habitual, if this method were ſtrictly adhered to; and young people would, at an early age, be capable of learning what has generally been taught to men in years of maturity. But this can never be effected without a regularity too nice to be exactly marked out in a book. It will require a vigilance and attention from the teacher to follow up every part of inſtruction, with a ſuitable degree of exerciſe and examination.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES TO THE SCIENCES OF LOGIC AND LANGUAGE.

CHILDREN have hitherto learnt things, qualities, properties, relations, accidents, changes, movements, &c. without being called upon to analyſe the diſtinct nature of theſe objects. They have viewed individual objects in connection with each other, but not in connection with the whole. It is this comprehenſive view or the whole world which we underſtand by the name of logic. All the objects of perception, are either ſubſtances or modes.

Under the general term ſubſtance, is comprehended every thing which ſubſiſts from its own nature, and of itſelf. Having been rendered familiar with different claſſes

claſſes of ſubſtances, it will be no difficult matter for a child to take a more general ſurvey of every thing which ſurrounds him, and embrace the whole of that within his view, from which he has been perpetually accuſtomed to ſelect different parts. This is only one ſtep higher in the operation of generalyſing, and includes no new objects, but only a greater number of thoſe which he has already learnt.

In order to make the definition of *ſubſtance*, as clear as poſſible, it would be neceſſary to elucidate it by numerous examples, and to enſure a thorough comprehenſion of it from him, he ought likewiſe to be obliged to collect many other examples for himſelf, ſolely by the aid of the definition.

With a clear and diſtinct idea of the general nature of ſelf-ſubſiſtence, he may ſafely proceed to claſs ſubſtances into animate and inanimate, corporeal and ſpiritual, of which he ſhould learn the real diſtinctions by accurate definitions. Be-

fore, he viewed things only according to their appearances; but now he muſt conſider them as they ſtrike the underſtanding.

Under the diviſion of ſubſtances, into corporeal and ſpiritual, the boy learns the nature of abſtracting, which is one fruitful ſource of our ideas. A corporeal ſubſtance is a body, which has ſhape, ſize, dimenſion, ſituation, &c. but a ſpiritual ſubſtance is the idea which we have of ſomething exiſting by itſelf; as *hope*, *fear*, *knowledge*, *exiſtence*, *act*, &c. Now, all theſe ſubſtances are originally nothing but the modes of corporeal ſubſtances or bodies. *Hope*, *fear*, and *knowledge*, is the mode of thinking, or ſenſible beings; viz. a thinking being *hopes*, *fears*, and *knows*. *Exiſtence*, and *act*, is the mode of every thing, for every thing *exiſts*, and every thing changes its place, which is to *act*. There would be no *hope*, *fear*, *knowledge*, *exiſtence*, or *act*, without ſome one to *hope*, *fear*, *know*, *exiſt*, or *act*.

act. Therefore corporeal ſubſtances are the ſubjects of ſpiritual ſubſtances, which depend upon the former for their exiſtence. They have no other independent ſubſiſtence than what the mind has formed, by abſtracting the mode from the ſubject to which it adheres, and conceiving it ſomething capable of having its modes likewiſe.

This operation muſt be learnt by practice and obſervation. It would, perhaps, be improper to enlarge on this diviſion, until a boy have been habituated to conſider modes according to the different claſſes, which we ſhall conſider hereafter. Subſtances are again diviſible into wholes and parts. A whole contains within itſelf, united in one independent body, diſtinct eſſences and properties, neceſſary for the production of ſome given end. Thus a *horſe*, which is alive, and has all its limbs, is a whole, diſtinct from other beings, which may have ſimilar parts; but if that horſe were dead, and its limbs ſeparated, it would no longer be a whole, but a part

of ſomething which had been a whole. Therefore horſes, and all animals, vegetables, &c. are diviſible into wholes; but liquids, and many ſubſtances, ſuch as *hay*, *ſtraw*, *lead*, *gold*, *iron*, &c. are diviſible only into parts, becauſe we can form no idea of diſtinct objects, compounded of any diſtinct parts, which may be uſed ſeparately. From this view of ſubſtances a boy acquires the idea of number.

The next objects of perception are modes which comprehend qualities, properties, attributes, changes, actions, and, in ſhort, every ſtate of being in a ſubſtance. Of courſe, whatever we perceive, which is not ſubſtance, muſt be mode. This ſtep is very natural in the progreſs of thought, and muſt be very parallel to the capacity.

Modes deſerve conſideration, according to their various diviſions, into eſſential, or accidental, and the former into the primary and ſecondary.

An

An eſſential mode is that manner or ſtate of being, in a ſubſtance, which is peculiar to it, and diſtinguiſhes it from other bodies. Thus roundneſs in a bowl, ſeeing in the eye, hearing in the ear. A bowl would not be a bowl without that quality; the eye would not be an eye, or the ear an ear, without the capacity of receiving their appropriate impreſſions.

Accidental modes, on the other hand, are ſuch as may or may not exiſt without altering the nature of ſubſtances, as roughneſs, and ſmoothneſs, in a bowl.

So modes are either abſolute or relative; the abſolute are ſuch as exiſt in the mind, independently of every other mode, as roundneſs, or ſmoothneſs, in a bowl; for if nothing elſe exiſted in the world, a bowl might be round; but greatneſs, and ſmallneſs, are relative modes, becauſe they exiſt entirely upon the compariſon of two or more objects.

From this view of ſubſtances, and modes, a ſcholar will learn the firſt ſource

of something which had been a whole. Therefore horſes, and all animals, vegetables, &c. are diviſible into wholes; but liquids, and many ſubſtances, ſuch as *hay*, *ſtraw*, *lead*, *gold*, *iron*, &c. are diviſible only into parts, becauſe we can form no idea of diſtinct objects, compounded of any diſtinct parts, which may be uſed ſeparately. From this view of ſubſtances a boy acquires the idea of number.

The next objects of perception are modes which comprehend qualities, properties, attributes, changes, actions, and, in ſhort, every ſtate of being in a ſubſtance. Of courſe, wh[illegible] perceive, wh[illegible] is not ſubſta[illegible] mode. [illegible] ſtep is very [illegible] the progr[illegible] thought, [illegible] very parallel [illegible] capacity.

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of his ideas by means of perception. After which he may trace the ſources of of all his ideas, and all the operations of thought. The diviſion of ideas will afford an opportunity for explaining the conſtruction of the mind to a boy. Ideas are divided into ſenſible, ſpiritual, abſtract, univerſal, particular, and complex. From whence he is made acquainted with ſuch ideas as are the direct impreſſions of the ſenſes, and ſuch as are produced by the operation of reflecting on ourſelves, and the nature of our ideas and feelings.

From abſtract ideas the nature of abſtraction may be learnt.

Univerſal and particular ideas, and the nature of generalyſing, are explained at the ſame time, as are ſimple and complex ideas, and the operation of analyſis.

From this comprehenſive acquaintance with things, and their diviſions, and the ideas formed of them, a ſcholar may be prepared for the ſtudy of language. The abſurdity of teaching boys words which

are the ſigns of things, before they are made acquainted with the things they repreſent, is equalled by nothing but the glaring contradiction of teaching them a native language, through the medium of a foreign one.

The natural conſequence of ſuch a premature education is, that the memory muſt receive the whole burden, and be loaded with the jargon of empty ſounds.

According to the uſual routine of learning, a boy is made to commit the whole of Aſhe's, Knowle's, or ſome other grammar, to memory. Theſe grammars contain little more than the definitions of the different parts of ſpeech, which it would be morally impoſſible for any one to underſtand, who has not been previouſly acquainted with the nature of things, with as much accuracy as I have pointed out. As a proof of theſe aſſertions, let the connections between words and things be fully conſidered. What is a SUBSTANCE, in the technical phraſe of grammar, but

a NOUN? What is a MODE of that ſubſtance but an ADJECTIVE, VERB, or ADVERB? For example, a ſubſtance may be *hot* or *cold*, *hard* or *ſoft*, &c. which is an ADJECTIVE; or *harder*, *ſofter*, &c. which are degrees of compariſon in thoſe adjectives? A ſubſtance may *exiſt*, *act*, or *change*, which is a VERB, and if it exiſt, act, or change in any particular manner, it is an adverb. The other parts of ſpeech, though not ſo regularly connected, are ſtill dependent upon the principal ſpecies of words, the NOUN. Subſtances have relations with each other which are PREPOSITIONS, or they are ſupplied by other words beſides the nouns, which are PRONOUNS, or they are combined together, which are CONJUNCTIONS. The diviſion of words is here evidently proved to depend on the diviſion of things. If, therefore, this order were preſerved, a child would perceive the foundation, and, inſtead of ſtoring up any particular ſet of words in his memory, would find the definitions a ſuf-

ſufficient guide to direct him in diſtinguiſhing one part of ſpeech from another.

Perhaps it may be ſaid that the definitions are ſufficiently clear for a ſcholar to underſtand, as much as is neceſſary for his purpoſe, in learning the nature of language. Experience proves to the contrary; or elſe why are children, and even boys of ten or fourteen, ſet to learn the parts of ſpeech, under every word, in a dictionary? An accurate knowledge of the definition would ſupply this long and laborious exertion by a ſingle effort. Beſides, that after all no learning can prevent the miſtakes, ſo common among young people, of confounding nouns with verbs, or prepoſitions with adverbs, &c.

In conſequence of this ignorance, in the outlines of languages, a ſcholar is unable to form a juſt idea of ſentences. Of courſe the memory muſt level all difficulties to one common ſtandard. The rules of ſyntax are ſtammered over until the boy be capable of applying them exactly,

(according to the imperfect import of the terms) to the language in queſtion. Moſt of theſe rules are general principles, which flow from the nature of things, and apply to all languages equally. Thus the agreement of the adjective, or verb, with the noun, evidently ariſes from the ſubſerviency of the other parts of ſpeech to the noun. And government, which is the influence of one word upon another, ariſes from the ſenſe of the words.

An acquaintance with things and words ſingly, or in connection with one another, may lead to the knowledge of propoſitions and ſentences, and the nature of reaſoning, viz. of deducing a chain of conſequences from an original ſimple propoſition. Practice will therefore be eſſential in firſt analyſing true and falſe ſyllogiſms upon the ſimpleſt ſubjects. As, for example, ſuppoſe a boy were aſked to prove the falſity of this ſophiſm,

A man is an animal,
A gooſe is an animal,
Therefore a man is a gooſe,

he

he would retrace the exact meaning of the words *man*, *animal*, and *goose*, and upon finding that a man and a goose have a general resemblance, which makes them both animals, and a particular difference, which makes them distinct species of the same genus, he perceives that the conclusion is not necessary from the two premises.

From this plain sophism, it is evident that no boy or man can be proof against false reasoning, who has not been in the habits of studying things, and minutely marking their agreement and difference. How totally unfitted then must young people be, who, neither at school or at home have heard a word of reason, to enter a world, where their own passions combine with those of other men, to pervert the nature of things and the order of their own conceptions.

SECT. XIII.

AN APPLICATION TO THE STUDY OF ARITHMETIC.

PERHAPS previouſly to the exerciſe of reaſoning upon this plan, it may be proper for a boy to learn the ſcience of numbers, as an introduction to the more abſtruſe ſciences of Geometry and Algebra.

The knowledge of this ſcience is much impeded by a want of properly underſtanding the firſt principles of numeration. Boys in general are taught to enumerate, without knowing the reaſons upon which it is built. They are generally at a loſs to comprehend the nature and reaſon for carrying the *tens* of any ſum to the next figures.

In the beginning, therefore, a boy ſhould be ſhown that figures are arbitrary characters,

racters, ſignifying complex ideas, as under the figure 2 are comprehended two ones, ſo of 3 three ones, 4 four ones, &c. until you come to 9, which includes nine ones or units; he will then eaſily perceive, that by the junction of the two arbitrary characters 0 and 1 the compound figure 10 is formed. The poſition of a figure in this caſe conſtitutes the difference of *ten* in all compound ſums. This poſition is equally arbitrary with the characters themſelves, and can therefore be explained by nothing but the thing itſelf. As in our own minds we always calculate the largeſt ſum, thus it happens that the ſmalleſt figures, as units, are placed on the right hand. And by the ſituation of one figure before the other, a ſcholar will learn, that we imagine the increaſe of *ten*, ſo that that figure, 3 for example, which, when placed at the right of another, ſignifies 3 units, will, on the left hand of the ſame, ſignify 3 tens, of two others, 3 hundred, and three others, 3 thouſands;

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roughly into the nature and method of performing theſe rules.

From whence he is enabled to perceive the connection between Addition and Multiplication, and, by the former, to form a table for himſelf of the latter, as, for example, ſuppoſe he wanted to know the amount of 8 times 8, let him add eight eights together; this exerciſe would remove the neceſſity of learning the multiplication table by rote, would unfold its conſtruction to his view, and afford a greater ſhare of practice on the rule of Addition. Upon the ſame plan, the table of pounds, ſhillings, and pence, may be analyſed and formed by the rule of multiplication; his data are theſe, that 4 farthings make 1 penny, 12 pence make 1 ſhilling, and 20 ſhillings 1 pound. If, therefore, he wanted to know how many ſhillings were contained in 36 pence, he might conſider how many twelves make 36, which is multiplication, and that is the number of the ſhillings.

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moſt complex nature, if he continue to be aided by the ſame regularity, and by queſtions from the teacher when any obſcurity ariſes. Suppoſe a child be not immediately able to arrange his ideas on the following queſtion in Reduction,

"In 52 crowns, as many half crowns, ſhillings, and pence, how many farthings?" it muſt be elucidated by the teacher. I am not ſuppoſing ſo complex an example to be the commencement. A boy has firſt reduced all the pounds, ſhillings, and pence, in their order, to their ſimple ſtate, and afterwards he may take any two, three, four, five, or more ſubjects, that are found proper. Having diſcovered, by multiplication, how many ſhillings there are in 30, 50, 90, 100, or 150 pounds, &c. or how many pence in 5, 10, 15, 20, &c. ſhillings, or how many farthings in 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, &c. pence, he may proceed to conſider how many ſhillings and pence, or how many ſhillings, pence, and farthings, there may be in ſo many

many pounds, or in ſo many pounds and ſhillings, or in ſo many pounds, ſhillings, and pence, or in ſo many pounds, ſhillings, pence, and farthings. After which, as the queſtion before us involves crowns and half crowns, he will previouſly learn their component parts, which will enable him, with the aid of queries like the following, to digeſt the ſeveral particulars.

What number of ſhillings and pence is there in a crown?

What number of ditto in a half crown?

What number of pence in a ſhilling?

What number of farthings in a penny?

If, in order to find out how many ſhillings there were in two pounds, you would multiply 20 by 2, what would you multiply 52 crowns by, in order to find out the number of pence?

What would you multiply by, in order to diſcover the number of farthings in theſe pence?

Cannot the number of pence and farthings in 52 half crowns, 52 ſhillings, and

52

52 pence, be diſcovered by the ſame operations?

How would you find out the ſum of all together?

The ſame order is neceſſary in finding great numbers out of ſmall, by the operation of diviſion and in all the other rules of arithmetic.

This plan will no doubt appear tedious, but it muſt be acknowledged that nothing complex can be rendered intelligible, without a thorough analyſis of it in all its component parts. The exerciſe of thought which it requires will amply repay the labour, by ſtrengthening the faculties and organizing the mind.

SECT. XIV.

AN APPLICATION TO THE STUDY OF GRAMMAR AND THE POWERS OF SPEECH.

A KNOWLEDGE of what is comprehended under grammar, is generally the ſubſtance of a boy's learning; but I cannot help conſidering it as the ſubſtance of his ignorance. Grammar is, in every reſpect, a ſubject of inferior importance, and the little knowledge which any boy acquires of it, is truly inſignificant. Grammar, as a ſcience, has, without doubt, its advantages in refining language, and correcting barbariſms and impurities. The ſtudy of grammar is likewiſe a neceſſary requiſite to acquire a good ſtyle. But it appears by no means deſerving the extravagant attentions which have

have been paid to it by ſome, or the ſevere cenſures which have been paſſed on thoſe who have violated its rules.

The ſtudy of grammar comprehends the mechanical formation of words, their concord and government, which relate to ſentences. In languages where there is much inflection, many more rules are neceſſary than in the Engliſh. However, a boy ought to learn theſe rules (which are founded upon the nature of things) as a ſuitable preparation for the ſtudy of foreign languages.

The ſame order is neceſſary here as elſewhere. It is uſual to confound the diviſion of words, according to the nature of things, and the inflexions of words, together. But the moſt ſimple method appears to be, firſt to conſider the general diviſion of words into the parts of ſpeech, then the different modes of forming them, and afterwards, their influence upon each other, which latter is ſyntax. The diviſion of words into parts of ſpeech, has already

already been conſidered, as being a general principle. Words admit of a formation in three different ways, viz. by derivation, compoſition, and inflexion. Each of theſe three ways depends upon the preceding diviſion of words, according to the nature of our ideas.

Derivations are ſuch words as are made to expreſs a more or leſs extenſive idea by the addition of certain ſyllables, called affixes or prefixes. The firſt are ſo called, becauſe they are joined to words; and the ſecond, becauſe they are placed before them.

Thus, the abſtract terms are derived from the concrete; as, from to know, comes knowledge; from to acknowledge, comes acknowledgement; from modeſt, comes modeſty; and from grateful, ungrateful, &c. &c.

Derivation is generally called etimology, becauſe it ſignifies the tracing words from their foreign extraction. Derivation may, however, be conſidered as proximate and remote

remote. The firſt, including words only that are derived from the language in which they exiſt; and the ſecond, comprehending thoſe only which are drawn from another language. The ſecond is of inferior importance, ſince the preſent exiſting ſignification of words can be derived from no ſource ſo well as the moſt general acceptation which they may be found to have received among men at preſent. In fact, if not learnt by obſervation, it would be contradictory to expect any perſon to learn, from the uſe of a word ſeveral centuries ago, what is the ſenſe now generally affixed to it. Remote etimology, therefore, is of no farther uſe, than to ſhew us the mechaniſm and origin of language. It enables us to form ſome idea of paſt periods. It is a ſpecies of hiſtory which will certainly repay the labour of ſuch as derive pleaſure from it; beſides that it is peculiarly uſeful to thoſe, who, having firſt learnt their own language, wiſh to become acquainted

quainted with others. An attention to this affinity will ſerve as a remarkable aid in their ſtudies.

The utility of *proximate etimology* is to increaſe the ſcholar's ſtock of words, to exerciſe him in recapitulating what he has before learnt, relative to the nature of the ideas they expreſs, and to unfold, in part, the mechaniſm of language.

By *compoſition*, two diſtinct words are ſo united as to form one, the former of which explains the latter, as *evening-ſtar*.

By *inflexion*, words expreſs the common relations of time, place, number, &c. from the addition or change of ſingle letters or ſyllables, as *man*, *men*.

From a view of theſe three modes, the advantage of the previous ſtudies muſt be too evident to need much elucidation. What boy at preſent underſtands the nature of abſtract ideas? or the relations of time, place, &c.? And yet theſe words are perpetually recurring in every grammar,

mar, and are paſſed over, both by teacher and learner, as matters not neceſſary to be explained; or otherwiſe they attempt an explanation as the words occur, at a time when the mind is occupied with very different objects; thus crowding images upon images, in the moſt diſorderly manner, and preſenting nothing clearly. After the formation of words, a boy ſhould proceed to their influence upon one another, under the articles of concord and government, of which we have before ſpoken. This will prepare him for that branch in the ſtudy of language, which has been hitherto totally neglected in education, though of greater importance than any part of grammar. This is the power of words.

The diviſion of words is, in ſome reſpects, conſonant with that of the ideas they expreſs, and in others it originates in its own conſtruction.

Words are either material or ſpiritual, abſtract or concrete, common or proper,

univocal or equivocal, ſynonimous or figurative, ſimple or compound, negative or poſitive.

The material and ſpiritual, abſtract and concrete terms, anſwer to the ideas which are ſo called, and of courſe may be inſtantly underſtood.

The common and proper anſwer to the univerſal and particular ideas.

The others are peculiar to the nature of language.

Univocal terms ſignify but one thing, and equivocal terms more than one thing.

Synonimous terms are ſuch as agree in the general ſenſe, but differ in the application.

Figurative terms are ſuch as originally expreſs one idea, and are uſed to expreſs another from ſome analogy between the objects expreſſed.

Terms are ſimple when only one word is uſed to expreſs one idea, and complex when more than one word is uſed. Poſitive terms are ſuch as have no negative

ſyllable

ſyllable affixed to them, and negative terms, on the contrary, have negative ſigns.

The advantage and abſolute neceſſity of every perſon becoming acquainted with this ſubject can ſcarcely be doubted. What has been advanced on attention, will apply here with redoubled force. Boys in general pronounce words in ſucceſſion, and their taſk is over. No concern is taken whether they have ſenſe or nonſenſe in their heads. They catch, here and there, unconnected thoughts from the paſſing ſounds; but, as they make no impreſſion, they are eaſily eraſed. They can form no application or deduction from what they read, becauſe the chain of their ideas is perpetually deſtroyed. On the other hand, they ought to learn theſe diſtinctions with care, and apply their knowledge to every ſentence in which ſimilar words occur. This cannot fail of inſpiring an intereſt and producing durable impreſſions. In future life they

will derive another ſerious advantage, which has hitherto been loſt to ſociety, viz. that of removing obſcurities and miſunderſtandings in their intercourſe with the reſt of mankind. No ſource of differences is ſo fruitful as miſtakes in the uſe and ſignification of terms. Almoſt all our diſputes in common life, and particularly on the ſubjects of politics, religion, and morals, ſpring from a miſunderſtanding of the acceptations which different men affix to the ſame term. An habitual attention, therefore, to the ſignification of words, will lead a perſon to define thoſe which he uſes himſelf, and to requeſt other people to do the ſame, previouſly to the commencement of a diſpute.

Another advantage attending this mode of education is, that a boy will avoid an error, too common among the generality of people, of confounding names with things. This error is the natural conſequence of learning things by names; and may be eaſily rectified by learning both

names

names and things, and never ſeparating the thing from the name.

Nor ſhall I neglect to conſider, among the number of advantages, the pleaſure which every youthful mind will experience on forming clear conceptions of every thing which paſſes through them, and never meeting with obſtacles from their ignorance, nor loſing information for want of underſtanding the words in which it is conveyed.

The exerciſes on the ſubjects of this Section ought to be as varied as thoſe we have formerly mentioned. As the ſphere of a boy's knowledge extends, there will be leſs occaſion for minuteneſs of examination and practice; but the objects will be leſs varied, and infinitely more important. Very great care will be required not to be too haſty in puſhing the ſcholrr forward, and making the tranſitions from one object to another too rapid. Let every ſtep be firm and well founded, before a ſecond be ventured upon; and

let not too many new things be crowded together, for fear of perplexity and fatigue.

On the logical part there will be ſcope for exerciſe in finding ſubſtances and modes to anſwer the definitions. From the uſe of the definitions a great load is taken off the memory, as they have no occaſion to learn the individual objects, but only the rules which comprehend them. Diſtinguiſhing our ideas from each other, analyſing the ſpiritual ideas and tracing their original; abſtracting modes, and obſerving the connection between the abſtracted ideas and the modes from whence they are derived; collecting the various ſimple and complex ideas which the objects around preſent; and, laſtly, tracing the diſtinctions between univerſal and particular ideas, are all neceſſary ſubjects of practice for one who has been previouſly inſtructed.

The powers of ſpeech muſt be learnt by obſervation on the modes of ſpeaking among

among different deſcriptions of people, and a ſtrict attention to the acceptations of words in different authors.

SECT. XV.

ON READING.

HAVING ſpoken of words and ſentences, unconnected with each other, the next ſtep is to conſider their force when linked together ſo as to form a regular diſcuſſion.

The formation, diviſion, and powers of words being thoroughly comprehended, a boy will be able to ſurmount the difficulty of keeping up the connection between each member of a ſentence, and each period. A familiarity with every individual idea that is placed in a ſentence, is neceſſary to enable him to obſerve their agreement and difference. It

is not ſuppoſed that he will have purſued the whole courſe of inſtruction in the preceding Sections, before he begin to read; for books may be adapted to every ſtage of improvement, from the collection of the objects of perception to the moſt complex ſubject of morals, politics, or religion.

The objects of nature afford an agreeable and intereſting diſcuſſion for the infantine mind; in which the ſentences may be ſhort, and the ideas are all demonſtrable by the ſenſes.

But tales are always more attractive than any other, becauſe the ideas are few, and even more familiar than the former. Not to mention that children can always keep the hero of their tale in view, without being obliged to obſerve every minute particular. This ſpecies of writing has uniformly been experienced to be ſuperior to any other; for which reaſon I ſhall now make ſome few remarks upon the method of fitting it for children.

All

All tales are not equally proper. An order muſt be preſerved, according to the information and obſervation of the ſcholar. One who has learnt things only from their general appearance, and not ſtudied things and words ſcientifically, ought not to read a tale which contains many ſpiritual and figurative terms. The repreſentations ſhould all be ſimple; the ſentences particularly ſhort, but ſtill ſo connected as to flow from each other, in order to exerciſe a ſcholar in whatever he has learnt. The epithets ought to be numerous, but very familiar. The ſubjects ought to be drawn from the common events which intereſt the feelings of a child.

According to the progreſs of the ſcholar, theſe tales ſhould contain more ſerious and intellectual materials, ſuch as call for the reflective powers of youth.

Under the form of tales much inſtruction may be given. Not only moral but intellectual ſubjects ſhould be taken. Every

tale ought to paint ſome vice or virtue peculiar to the age of the perſon who reads it, with the cauſes and effects of theſe actions upon himſelf and others.

The utility of tales is generally diminiſhed for want of a proper application of them to the minds of children. A boy ought not only to underſtand what he reads in a general manner, ſo as to be able to anſwer queſtions, but likewiſe to draw a moral from it, aided by his own obſervations on human life. And if the tale contain intellectual information, he ought to recall to his mind what he has learnt, and deduce, from what he knows, what may, perhaps, be unknown.

How far works of the imagination may be injurious to the minds of youth, it would be difficult to decide; it ſeems almoſt a paradox for human nature to delight more in fiction than reality. I ſhould conceive the pleaſure to ſpring more from habit and aſſociation than any real love of fiction. In early life children are impreſſed with

with the idea that ghoſts, ſpells, and magical deluſions, have their foundation in reality; and minds habituated to contemplate things as poſſible, though they do not ſee them, will not be prevented from enjoying the happy events, which the interference of ſpirits will produce in their tale. The intereſt which they take in the fate of the hero or heroine, will naturally be heightened when, from the depths of diſtreſs and miſery, they are exalted to the pinnacle of greatneſs and honour, by the aid of ſome friendly derviſe with his vial or candleſtick. He views the naked fact without regarding the means. We ought not, therefore, to expect any thing better from theſe writings than amuſement. It would be inconſiſtent for any mind to receive improvement from that which affords pleaſure only from the want of reflection.

But it is not probable, that whatever is ſo independent of our underſtanding ſhould not, in ſome degree, injure it.

This is in ſome reſpects the caſe. It ought only to amuſe, inſtead of which it faſcinates children. It prevents the proper uſe of their mental faculties. It unfits their minds for ſerious reflection, and directs their whole attention to itſelf.

The effects of ſuch writings may be counteracted by an habitual exerciſe of the mind on that which is real, before which the fictitious will always vaniſh, and leave to the perſon the unbiaſſed uſe of his faculties. If, in a ſtate of mind like this, young people can for a moment diveſt themſelves of the idea of their fiction, the amuſement becomes innocent, and ought not to be refuſed.

The ſubject of fictitious writings for children leads me naturally to the diſcuſſion of novels and romances.

I am ſorry that I am obliged to rank novels in the claſs of fictitious writings; but, according to their general ſtamp, they cannot with propriety be placed any higher. They ought to be the moſt

proper

proper books to put into the hands of youth, but now they are among the moſt improper.

Much has been ſaid in praiſe and diſpraiſe of theſe writings. By one claſs of perſons they are read with avidity, and approved of with moderation; whilſt by others, they are never peruſed but to condemn them with harſhneſs. The young will admire and the old cenſure, according to the ſtate of the paſſions peculiar to each age. Indiſcriminate judgements are always the reſult of paſſion or prejudice.

The attachment of moſt people to the relations of adventures, and the progreſs of individuals through life, ſprings from the ſympathy of our nature. In young people theſe feelings will, of courſe, be more acute than in thoſe whom ſad experience of life's calamities, and human vices, have rendered callous to the ſofter ſentiments of pity and compaſſion. Hence may be traced the different feelings of the young and the old toward novels.

But

But the cool reaſoner on men and things will feel it neceſſary to take a different view of this ſubject. Novels are extremely defective, but they are not ſo pernicious that a few alterations might not fit them for uſe.

All novels give a falſe and deluſive glare to the pictures that they draw of human life; which is a ſort of fiction much more enſnaring than that of derviſes and fairies, as it approaches ſo near the reality, that readers in general are unable to detect the error. Human nature is painted in exaggerated colours. Every quality of body and mind is in extremes. Virtues and vices are always concentrated in individual objects, though in human life they are always diſſeminated and blended. The heroine is all beauty, modeſty, condeſcenſion, ſoftneſs, and judgement. The hero has a fine form, a handſome face, a manly carriage, a noble mind, an exalted generoſity, and extraordinary valour. In the inferior characters, exceſſive deformity

of

of perſon is aſſociated with exceſſive deformity of mind.

The fallacy of this picture may be proved by obſervation. Beauty, if by that word we underſtand ſymmetry of feature, freſhneſs of complexion, and elegance of form, is generally the moſt remote from virtue, for it is attended by the oppoſite extreme, which it engenders and cheriſhes. In beautiful women, vanity, caprice, petulance, and haughtineſs, almoſt univerſally reſide; and in handſome men, the moſt deteſtable tyranny united to the vices of drinking, debauchery, and brutal ſeverity.

With the reverſe of this beauty, you will perceive modeſty, benevolence, prudence, and inward worth; which, to phyſiognomiſts, will be evidently pourtrayed in the countenance. The countenance is in a great meaſure the index of the mind. The looks, the walk, the every motion, will combine to mark the character. If beauty, therefore, were made to conſiſt in

anima-

animation of countenance and ſuavity of manners, it would be improper to ſeparate the internal qualities from the external appearance. Not that I ſuppoſe the human mind can ever entirely diveſt itſelf of that predilection which the advantages of perſon produce; nor would it anſwer any moral purpoſe for it to arrive at this ſtate of indifference; but the inſtant a beautiful form ſupplies the want of real excellence, or the reverſe precludes intrinſic merit from the homage and reſpect due to it, the paſſion becomes injurious.

With this view I object to the repreſentations in novels, which are calculated to fan the flame already too violent in the minds of youth toward perſonal attractions. The paſſion is always turbulent and capricious; it is an enemy to repoſe, and unhinges the mind for any ſolid reflection or uſeful exertions. This perturbation is not a little increaſed by the lively intereſt which young people take in the welfare of the two beings who are drawn

thus

thus perfect in mind and body. The object of the writer is, to direct your attention toward the two principal perſonages, whoſe firſt acquaintance, inſtantaneous attachment, conſequent difficulties, vows of fidelity and unalterable affection, fears, doubts, hopes, ultimate union and certain bliſs, are to excite the alternate feelings of love, admiration, fear, anxiety, hope, and joy, in your mind. Such pictures of the fancy require no maſterly hand to rouſe theſe feelings in young people, who are habituated to indulge ſuch deluſive dreams. Every paltry tale of a lover and his miſtreſs will revive thoſe ſenſations which afford them ſo much pleaſure. We need not, therefore, wonder to ſee the incalculable number of theſe productions which are perpetually making their appearance, and the uneaſy hankering of youth to peruſe them.

As the uſe of the judgement muſt be entirely ſupplanted by the influence of the paſſions in theſe caſes, they are thus far

far highly injurious, and ſhould be kept out of the hands of youth as much as poſſible. It is evident, that in ſuch a ſtate of mind they can derive no moral improvement from them, if any were to be found; and they may find fuel for their own future miſery.

A true novel, however, ought to be a faithful picture of human life, and need not be leſs intereſting for being faithful. The windings and mazes of the human heart ought to be unfolded; the virtues and vices of men ought to be repreſented in their conduct, with the cauſes and effects of their folly, and the methods they adopt to extricate themſelves from embarraſſment, by plunging, perhaps, more deeply into vice and extravagance. In this caſe, the motives of human actions will be laid open, and the ſerious conſequences which will ſometimes ariſe, from trifling events, to thoſe who are the dupes of their own fancies. All theſe I acknowledge to be incompatible with the theme which

now

now occupies the minds of youth. It is no ſtimulator to the paſſions. It lulls them aſleep by the exerciſe of the judgement. But, notwithſtanding, it does not preclude the indulgence of compaſſion, fear, ſuſpenſe, averſion, admiration, and all the feelings which the extraordinary events of human life, and the viciſſitudes of fortune, will neceſſarily produce. It limits this indulgence, however, within the bounds of moderation, and allows only ſuch feelings as ſpring from the love of virtue, or the deteſtation of vice.

If novels were written with this view, and read with theſe reſtrictions, they might prove the moſt agreeable vehicle of improvement to youth, and would ſerve for the ſame purpoſe as tales for children.

Of the numerous publications which appear under this title, very few contain materials of this kind. They are generally written by females for the uſe of females, and of courſe cannot contain much

much erudition or depth of obſervation. Not to mention that the ſphere of action which they aſcribe to their hero or heroine begins with courtſhip and ends with marriage, a ſtate in which more moral duties are comprehended than in all the preceding years of a young perſon's life. But we muſt not here fall into the error of paſſing an indiſcriminate cenſure.

Among the moſt judicious writings of this kind, and thoſe which have the beſt moral tendency, may be reckoned the works of Charlotte Smith. Her acuteneſs of obſervation, and juſtneſs of deſcription, indicate a thorough knowledge of the intricacies of the human heart: but ſhe has ſo unfortunately fallen into the error of aſſociating virtue with external beauty, and vice with its oppoſite, that it requires more diſcretion than young people may be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs, to detect the error and avoid its influence.

What has been ſaid of novels applies with equal force to romances, which dif-

fer

fer from the former only by the introduc-duction of imaginary beings, or extraordinary things in nature.

In union with works of the imagination may be peruſed thoſe of reality, which comprehend biography and hiſtory.

The daily occurrences which happen to private individuals are ſeldom ſufficiently ſtriking and unuſual to rouſe the attention, and intereſt the feelings. Biography is therefore ſeldom peruſed with much eagerneſs, unleſs it receive an intrinſic value, from a particular reſpect for the talents or character, or from our attachment to the perſon deſcribed. As young people may be ſcarcely entered ſufficiently into the world of information to form any diſtinct attachments for themſelves, theſe motives are ſeldom likely to afford them pleaſure in peruſing the lives of individuals. Of courſe, works of fiction would be ſought after with avidity, while the former were laid aſide.

Upon

Upon reviewing the mode of writing biography, this diſtaſte will inſtantly be accounted for. Lives are generally the mere relations of facts, without tracing their foundation. They ſpeak of actions, without mentioning the motives that gave riſe to them. They recount events, without any reference to the conduct which produced them. Little or no intereſt can therefore be taken, by either young or old, in circumſtances that are not within their knowledge, and which can, by no analogy, be brought home to their own peculiar taſte and inclination. A relation of actions, without their appropriate motives, muſt be as inſipid as words without their proper ſignification. They are of no effect but to tire the eye and the ear. It is of little value to know where a perſon was born, of what parents, or where and by whom he was educated, or into what ſituations and places he went, unleſs theſe circumſtances are

ſhewn

ſhewn to be the ſources of his peculiar mode of thinking.

Biography, in order to intereſt, ought to contain a hiſtory of mind, in which no movement of importance ſhould be omitted, nor any trait in the character loſt. For this reaſon, every individual would be the moſt faithful hiſtorian of himſelf, upon the ſuppoſition that he muſt know more of himſelf than others could. It is true, men are but little in the habits of ſelf-reflection, and perhaps not always perfectly acquainted with the motives that influence their own conduct. But ſtill they are as familiar with themſelves as others can be. The deficiency of obſervation bears a proportion.

Beſides, if men be partial to themſelves from that foible, ſelf-conceit, ſo common to humanity, others are prejudiced, either in their favour or otherwiſe, from perſonal attachment or private pique. The defects may therefore ſtill be put in the balance with each other.

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The advantages of biography may be very numerous, by giving examples of virtue and its oppoſite, inſpiring a love of rectitude, inſtilling good principles, and laying the foundation for a perfect acquaintance with man.

Biography treats of individuals, and Hiſtory of collective bodies. This latter view of human nature is infinitely more extenſive, and requires much more ſteady reflection in order to derive any pleaſure or inſtruction. With little, if any thing, to excite attention, there is a wide field for obſervation and intellectual improvement: much too wide to produce ſtrong impreſſions. When we reflect on individuals, the mind, intent upon one object, can participate with it in all its good or bad fortune, and all its feelings, pleaſurable and painful; but in the events of a nation, the objects are ſo confuſed and extended, as to deſtroy all the influence of participation.

Hiſtory will, therefore, be the laſt thing that can be read with any degree of intereſt; and for young people the ſubject requires an order and regularity which has not hitherto been preſerved.

Hiſtory may be divided into natural and moral. The firſt is the hiſtory of plants, animals, and minerals; the ſecond that of men.

As natural hiſtory is an object of the ſenſes, it makes the more inſtantaneous and forcible impreſſion. It is neceſſary, however, in this ſubject, to preſerve an order in the courſe of reading which ought to be purſued. Too great a minuteneſs in detailing the actions, foods, and modes of living, peculiar to each animal, would fatigue without conveying any uſeful improvement. The qualities, diſpoſitions, general form and diſtinctions, are neceſſary inſtructions; particularly the conſtruction, progreſs, and changes of inſects, which are the moſt remarkable objects of nature.

Much moral improvement may be derived from this ſtudy. It teaches children, that animals partake of the ſame qualities with themſelves, only in an inferior degree; and are ſuſceptible of impreſſions as well as themſelves, and conſequently deſerving of our tenderneſs. This demonſtration will have more effect than any perſonal advice or correction for cruelty. The mind, inſenſibly, by this ſtudy, acquires a ſofter tone, and the harſher feelings gradually give place to ſympathy and gentleneſs.

Under the article natural hiſtory, may be comprehended that which treats of man in a natural, and not amoral ſenſe. This ſtudy is probably the laſt which moſt people might think entitled to attention; but it appears to me, on the contrary, to be of real importance.

The human form is very complicated, and the ſtudy of it, when thoroughly purſued, is equally ſo; but, as particular information

formation on this ſubject forms no part of the plan here propoſed, it may be ſimplified to any extent, from conſidering every artery, vein, or nerve, to the mere general diviſion of the body into trunk, head, and limbs.

There would two principal benefits reſult from this ſtudy to young people, which muſt be particularized here.

The mind becomes familiar with objects which, from the aſſociation that perpetual concealment produces, are very inflammatory to the paſſions. Concealment can never be perpetual and perfect, even if it were uſeful; and an imperfect knowledge is more dangerous than any thing. The paſſions of curioſity and deſire, once rouſed, never reſt ſatisfied without farther information; which only ſerves to increaſe their reſtleſſneſs and avidity after ſubjects of that nature. On the contrary, if nature be unveiled to a boy, without any glare of artifice, or parade of concealment, he views it with a

cool and diſpaſſionate mind, and loſes that inceſſant thirſt for obſcenity to agitate his mind and provoke his feelings.

Another ſtill more powerful reaſon is, that it would lay the foundation for a proper knowledge of themſelves: a knowledge that would be uſeful, not only to the health, but for the regulation of the mind. The mind and body have a ſtrong and reciprocal influence upon each other. Violent paſſions ſhake and diſorder the frame. Intemperance weakens the nerves and irritates the paſſions. Every perſon ought, therefore, to acquire ſuch a general knowledge of his own conſtitution, as would enable him to make daily obſervations on the ſtate of his body, and on what affects him moſt, either by giving ſtrength or increaſing his debility. To boys at ſchool, a knowledge of themſelves would ſerve to prevent practices which undermine the conſtitution and vitiate the taſte. As theſe are committed in ſecret, they elude the vigilance of teachers,

teachers, unequal to the taſk of circumventing the contrivances of juvenile paſſion. The exerciſe of authority would, in this caſe, be rendered as unneceſſary as it is now inefficacious. When properly taught the conſequences of ſuch indulgences, there would be few ſo fool-hardy as to run the riſk of injuring their health.

Moral hiſtory relates entirely to the actions of men in a collective ſtate. The ſubjects of which it is compoſed are as various as the arts and ſciences which have ſucceſſively been cultivated. The progreſs of mind is traced in the extenſion of knowledge and invention. The developement of the faculties may be minutely marked in the manners of nations and the changes of government. An order is, therefore, peculiarly eſſential to be purſued in a courſe of reading hiſtory.

In general, young people have abridgements put into their hands, containing a ſhort outline of all the heterogeneous ſubjects which relate to the ſtudy of morals,

politics, and religion. The inconſiſtency in the preſent mode of education is here ſtriking. Boys are never required to think upon any thing; they may paſs fourteen years of their lives without forming two ideas beyond what immediately aſſails their ſenſes; and yet they are obliged to read about court intrigues, the vices of rulers, and the revolutions in manners, opinions, and governments. The conſequences of this are evident; a total ignorance and diſguſt will inevitably follow.

On the other hand, the ſtudy of hiſtory ought to be regulated by the previous information of the ſcholar. The civil and military affairs of nations are the moſt unintelligible of all ſubjects to the underſtandings of children; as they comprehend ſuch a vaſt variety of remote objects which do not fall within the reach of their obſervation. That branch of hiſtory ought to be deferred to the laſt, and to be preceded by an accurate knowledge of government

vernment and the inſtitutions of civil ſociety.

The ſtudy of language, and morals, may be elucidated, in a pleaſant manner, from the different languages, manners, dreſs, virtues, and vices, of different nations. We have already ſhewn the method of unfolding the principles of general language to children. The principles of morality ought to be explained with the ſame clearneſs as thoſe of language, but the mode of illuſtration may be ſomewhat different. The foundation of virtue is theoretical, and admits of ſpeculative opinions, which would be embarraſſing to a young mind; but there are many virtuous principles, the truth of which are demonſtrable by our own feelings. Theſe principles may be as happily elucidated from the hiſtory of manners and cuſtoms, as from the events of common life, and will intereſt a child ſooner than any other branch of hiſtorical information. And in order to render this

particular more intereſting, the introduction of appropriate anecdotes will ſerve to enliven the ſubject and impreſs the moral on the mind.

The next to this ſtudy, is the hiſtory of arts and ſciences; which may be ſucceeded by the civil, and, laſt of all, the religious affairs of different nations. In each of theſe ſubjects there is full ſcope for the judgement of the teacher, in aſſigning no more than a ſuitable portion of reading to each boy, according to his capacity and information.

After or during the ſtudy of hiſtory, a copious fund of materials demands the attention of the juvenile ſcholar, on the ſubjects of morality, religion, politics, and the ſciences. Hitherto the mind of a child has been little inured to doubt. His information has been confined to a relation of facts, ſo well authenticated as not to admit of doubt, or a collection of obſervations drawn from external objects by the aid of the ſenſes. Subjects of

of diſputation are the greateſt efforts of mental exertion. They require a clear head, a ſteady reflection, and a comprehenſive acquaintance with men and things. To reconcile incongruities, to confute abſurdities, to unravel myſteries, to analyſe and ſimplify complexities, is an arduous taſk for the ſincere enquirer after truth. Moſt men ſatisfy themſelves with what gives them leaſt trouble, viz. with holding the opinions which their fathers had done before them. They will doubtleſs receive the thanks of thoſe in power, who know well how to profit by this indolence and mental depravation. But as all the world is not uniform in this opinion or diſpoſition, any more than in others, it is to be hoped that the idea of initiating young people into the habits of diſputation will not be univerſally conſidered as viſionary. The ſtudy of theſe ſubjects appear to me no matter of indifference. They are not of the ſame nature with the claſſicks, which ſerve to gratify the

curiosity of those who have time to pursue them. They concern all men equally, and affect the happiness of every individual in the same degree, let their situation in life be what it may. All men have relative duties of parents, children, husbands, brothers, and fellow-creatures, to perform. This constitutes morality, which, notwithstanding it has been the subject of much investigation, still remains confused, and complicated, in the minds and practice of mankind. Virtue is in the mouth of every one, but real goodness in the hearts of but very few, and sound principles of rectitude in the heads of still fewer. The daily conduct of men in human life is generally esteemed too insignificant to deserve mature deliberation and study. They therefore very seldom exert themselves to form any fixed rules of action to which they may constantly adhere; and much less frequently do they think of inspiring their children with any valuable principles, as a guide for

for their future conduct. The conſequences of this error are as unlimited as they are ſerious. They influence us in ourſelves, in our families, and in our intercourſe with the world in general. Society perpetually experiences this defect in morality from the private diſſentions, the untractable tempers, the petty acts of ſelfiſhneſs or malignity, the fooliſh arrogance, and contemptible tyranny of the individuals who compoſe it.

The firſt ſtep towards rectifying this error in youth is, the placing before them, in a regular order, the different moral ſyſtems which have been formed, according to the nature of the particular ſubjects treated of; and, in like manner, the various opinions of men upon religion and civil government. Upon theſe two latter points men have committed numerous errors for want of a comprehenſive knowledge. Religion has ever been ſubject to the extremes of fanaticiſm or ſcepticiſm, and the votaries of both have not been

ſparing in their anathemas, and wit, againſt each other. There is no ſubject in which men ſet more value upon their own opinions, or feel themſelves more juſtified in an inſolent arrogance, and an aſſuming dogmatiſm, over other men who differ from them, than on religion. The religious ſectary inſults you either with his pity, or his aſperſions on the purity of your motives, while the ſceptic vauntingly calls your underſtanding in queſtion. Religion, however, ought not to ſubject any man to the imputation of folly. It has leſs to do with the underſtanding than the feelings. It is an object of our hopes and wiſhes, and not of our judgement. Human reaſon and revelation have ever been enemies. Of this ſome men are ſo fully convinced as to publicly profeſs that they reject the exerciſe of this faculty entirely with regard to their religious creed, and build their faith upon internal evidence. This opinion offends the feelings of others, who, thinking it derogatory

tory to the dignity of human nature not to know the ground of the hope that is in them, have attempted to reconcile divine things with human.

From this propenſity have ariſen numerous ſyſtems, which have been oppoſed, altered, modified, and exchanged for new ones, raiſed upon their ruins. This propenſity, though favourable to the mental improvement and independence of man, has, nevertheleſs, produced more miſchief in private as well as public life, than any point that has attracted his attention. After all, however, I wiſh to be underſtood as not meaning to expreſs any direct ſentiment here on the ſubject of religion, farther than as it concerns the education of youth. Every man is ſufficiently ſatisfied with the opinions that he has formed to himſelf, to wiſh his children to follow the ſame courſe of thinking. This appears to be a neceſſary principle in a world of contending ſentiments; and the utmoſt exertion

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of liberality which can be expected from individuals is, that they ſhould permit their children, at a proper age, to read the opinions of all mankind without prepoſſeſſion or reſerve. This is the deſirable object to which the preceding obſervations have tended.

Politics have been intereſting at all periods of time, but at none more than the preſent. The viſions of men in this age are the offspring of ignorance and a miſguided ſpirit of enquiry. The enthuſiaſm for liberty has far outſtepped the bounds of prudence. Political convulſions have ever been the reſult of human paſſions warring with each other. Men, like ſchool-boys, have made a reſiſtance that has ſerved to rivet their chains the faſter. The calm of ſubſiding tumults is the moſt favourable æra for oppreſſion. The human mind, exhauſted by its own ungoverned efforts, ſinks into a ſtate of torpor and deſpondence, which diſcerning rulers never fail to turn to their own advantage.

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ſome fault in thoſe who are appointed as their rulers, and from their vices to trace the ſources of human calamities; forgetting that, by their own abſurd and immoral conduct, they place themſelves in the power of the more artful and ambitious. From theſe reflections I feel myſelf prepared to aſſert, *that the exerciſe of private virtue is the* ONLY SOURCE *of political happineſs*. I ſay the only ſource, becauſe I conceive public ſpirit, and the premature efforts to deſtroy tyranny, to be fallacious, and injurious to the end propoſed. But ſtill the knowledge of political opinions and ſyſtems, the nature of civil government, and the different forms which have been adopted in different ſtates, is peculiarly uſeful for a young mind. It ſhows the nature of man in ſocial life, and his relative ſituation in ſociety. For though no man ought to yield to the wild impulſe of his feelings, and blindly ſacrifice his life or comfort to patriotic zeal, there are occaſions in which a prudent interference

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in public affairs may be very beneficial; and a thorough acquaintance with the conſtitutions of ſociety may give ſolidity and weight to the opinion which is delivered. Thus far the propriety of unlimited reading has been argued from the importance of the three principal ſubjects. One advantage, however, peculiar to reading itſelf, ought not here to be forgotten; namely, the effect that it has in enlarging the mind and invigorating the faculties. Youth ought to be freed from every ſpecies of confinement in receiving inſtruction, and allowed the moſt unlimited range over the regions of knowledge. If a boy be accuſtomed to one author only, he learns but one ſet of words, and his mind concentrates itſelf within the circle of that man's conceptions. Let the author be ever ſo comprehenſive in his views, they are ſtill the views of but one man, who has trodden in only one path out of the thouſands which different individuals have marked out for themſelves.

ſelves. In order, therefore, to enter perfectly into any ſubject, in all its antecedents, conſequents, properties, parts, and relations, we muſt read the different arrangements, deſcriptions, amplifications, and ſtriking obſervations, contained in diſtinct writers. Every perſon has ſome favourite end to obtain in his performance. He wiſhes to correct a faulty diſtribution, to remove ſuperfluities, to ſupply deficiencies, clear up obſcurities, or exemplify ſome points which had not been treated with ſufficient attention. In all ſuch caſes therefore, unleſs the writer be a mere copier, he muſt have acquired a ſort of diction and chain of thought peculiar to himſelf. There are ſcarcely any perſons' productions, if they be not of the moſt puerile kind, which may not convey ſome uſeful information, and repay the ſcholar for his labour in peruſing; if it have no other uſe, it enables him to ſee the different definitions and explanations on the ſame ſubject; which when deeply

reflected

reflected upon, maturely conſidered, and perfectly underſtood, will, in courſe of time, form an original train of ſentiment in his own mind.

I am well aware however, that, notwithſtanding all the advantages of general reading, it will ſerve only to confound, without the moſt regular and judicious arrangement. Different ſtatements preſented to a mind unorganized, tend to deſtroy the effect of the whole. Inſtead of analyſing each diſtinct ſentiment, and collecting thoſe which are oppoſite to each other into different diviſions, and then placing them in contraſt, the whole would become a chaos in his mind, from which he would have no power to extract a ſingle clear idea. The exerciſe that ought to invigorate his faculties, would then become their ruin. Let one author, or any particular part of an author, be ſo clearly comprehended, as that a boy ſhould be maſter of the thoughts contained in his work, and be capable of revolving

volving them over as his own. If the ſame caution be repeated in every ſucceeding author, and the exact difference between each be minutely pointed out in the progreſs of his reading, the moſt complicated ſubject would grow familiar to his underſtanding. In every queſtion of importance, he would firſt clear it of all foreign and cumbrous matter, then revolve it into diſtinct branches, according to their mediate or immediate tendency to the whole; and thus he would afterwards arrive at the firſt grand principle upon which the whole fabric of ſentiment has been raiſed. Having proved the truth or falſehood of this ſimple principle as clearly as his information will afford, he may proceed to the ſame proof of all the ſucceeding and dependant propoſitions.

SECT.

SECT. XVI.

ON COMPOSITION.

IT is of no leſs importance to our own advancement in life, than to the benefit of mankind, to be capable of expreſſing the ideas that we have formed. After what has been advanced on the ſtudy of language, and the cultivation of thought, little remains to be ſaid on the attainment of a good ſtyle. Like the other branches of ſtudy already conſidered, it has been viewed *ſingly*, and of courſe inaccurately. The inſtructions given upon it are therefore liable to all the objections advanced in different places of this work.

Compoſition, or ſtyle, is the cloathing of our thoughts in words. The connection between the former and the latter is as evident here as any where. A bombaſt ſtyle is

is a collection of fine words upon a trivial ſubject, which is an attempt of conceited ignorance to diſplay more knowledge than it poſſeſſes.

A florid ſtyle is a collection of figurative terms, ſimilies, compariſons, &c. which require leſs thought than feeling, and a vivid imagination rather than deep reflection.

A pathetic ſtyle is the effuſion of ſenſibility, and calculated to expreſs tenderneſs and ſympathy.

A clear ſtyle is the choice of words which are not dubious in their ſignification, and ſuch an arrangement of them as will at once ſtrike the reader with the idea intended to be conveyed.

A ſtrong ſtyle is a collection of ſuch words as convey a forcible impreſſion, and an omiſſion of all redundant expreſſions.

A correct ſtyle is the juſt adaption of words to the ſubject on which we write, and muſt be free from the idioms of foreign

reign languages, and the provincialiſms of the native.

A ſmooth ſtyle is ſuch a choice and arrangement of words and ſentences as will produce no diſcordancies on the ear.

Many of theſe ſtyles are peculiar to different characters. A half-informed youth will be moſt likely to have a bombaſt ſtyle. An ardent mind, that makes obſervations without much acute diſcernment, will generally write a florid ſtyle. This ſtyle may be aſſociated with much ignorance, and can be turned to any purpoſe, good or bad. The ſentimentaliſt will always aim at the pathetic.

A clear, ſtrong, pure, correct, and ſmooth ſtyle, is the offspring of clear ideas, deep reflection, extenſive reading, and conſiderable obſervation. Theſe, in fact, are the moſt effectual means of becoming familiar with that diction which can both amuſe and inſtruct. General rules can tend but very little to the improvement of ſtyle; they will ſerve, however,

ever, as an introduction to more minute obſervations on the uſe and acceptations of words and the beauties of ſpeech. For nothing contributes more to the formation of a good ſtyle, than a ſtrict attention to the varied turns of expreſſion in good writers. We inſenſibly acquire an originality in diction, as in ſentiment, by analyſing and digeſting the writings of others. If we be in the habits of peruſing elegant ſtyles, the ear becomes as averſe to vulgariſms and inharmonious expreſſions, as that of a muſician would be to ballad-ſinging.

The advantages of reading and obſervation, however, in forming a ſtyle, do not preclude the neceſſity of practice. Man cannot eſtimate his own powers without a trial. Habitual efforts at forming our ideas into ſentences contribute, not only to make us maſters of language, but to correct inaccurate ſentiments. Although a ſyſtematic mind will be at no loſs to expreſs its ideas, yet it is no leſs evident, that a perſon

perſon with confuſed and undigeſted conceptions, will find it very difficult, if not impoſſible, to expreſs his opinions on paper.

Compoſition is the touchſtone of ſentiment in a juvenile thinker. Vague and unconnected opinions will appear very ſtrong and clear in thought, which vaniſh into nothing when committed to writing. Our daily reflections will be as disjointed as the circumſtances that produce them. Without ſome other effort than that of revolving them frequently, they will continue the ſame unwieldy maſs, and ſerve for no better purpoſe than amuſement in general converſation.

Compoſition, on the contrary, requires the greateſt order to render it complete. Every ſentence ſhould bear a juſt relation with the preceding, and the whole ought ſo to accord with each part as to have the ſame general tendency. The exerciſe, therefore, properly ſpeaking, is

nothing leſs than the arrangement of the ideas (and conſequently the words expreſſing them) which we have acquired by reading, obſervation, converſation, and reflection. It is an exerciſe too uſeful to be neglected a moment after it can be begun. It cannot be entered upon too early, nor practiſed too much. As ſoon as a child is capable of forming letters and words, he ſhould be required to digeſt on paper the inſtruction that he has received. All the exerciſes of the foregoing Sections may be applied with peculiar advantage to that of compoſition.

Simple ſentences on ſome familiar objects of nature are the firſt ſteps, as, *the houſe is ſmall, the garden is large*, &c. and afterwards complex ſentences on the ſame ſubjects, to initiate him into the uſe and force of connectives, as *and, but, nevertheleſs, with, from*, &c. Thus, *the garden is large, has tall trees and long walks; the houſe is ſmall, but it has many rooms; my brother went with my ſiſter from London to York.*

York. Hence he may proceed to a deſcription of any complex ſubſtance, as a knife, a fork, a top, &c. wherein he ſhould explain the materials of which it is compoſed, the colour, ſhape, and uſe of the whole and every part. From ſo ſimple a thing as a knife, he may proceed to analyſe a houſe, coach, book, &c. in which he may conſider, as before, their materials, parts, uſes, &c.; as alſo their different genus and ſpecies, with the grounds of diſtinction. This may lead him to compoſe on animals, beginning with the horſe, which he would deſcribe as to his limbs, dimenſions, qualifications, and utility in compariſon with other animals. Here he would learn to form comparative ſentences. Moreover, in this place perhaps he might be led to form a moral reflection on the conduct of men toward theſe animals. Having pointed out the utility of the horſe, and the violence with which it is ſometimes treated, he might conclude with affirming, that

ſince ſuch ſeverity was unneceſſary, the actions ſprung either from a ſavage brutality or an ungovernable paſſion.

From things and animals he may proceed to men: firſt explaining their external figure, their ſizes at different ages, and their colours in different countries; after which he may deſcribe, in a general manner, the powers, inclinations, and characters of different men, which will prepare the way for ſpeaking of their moral conduct in common life.

In all theſe recapitulations of his knowledge, (for recapitulations they really are, ſince he is ſuppoſed to have been previouſly acquainted with theſe things,) it would be proper to aſſiſt him, firſt, by giving him the heads of his ſubjects as I have here laid them down, leaving him to dictate the reſt; and when he has been familiarized to the practice of compoſition, queſtions may be ſubſtituted in the place of thoſe heads, to ſerve as a guide

to

to the ſcholar in arranging the order of his ideas.

As an illuſtration of my meaning, ſuppoſe I take the moſt complex ſubſtance, a houſe: upon this might be given the following queſtions.

What is that part of the building which is firſt formed?

Why is its top not flat but bending?

What materials are generally uſed to form this part?

Is it made of more than one kind?

Which is the beſt, and why?

What diviſions are formed, and what are they called?

Why are they made?

What are the parts of a room?

Are the materials of which each part is made the ſame?

What are the uſes of each part, and of the whole?

Is it always intended for the ſame uſe?

Do not ſome houſes derive a particular name from their uſe?

Are there not ſome ſorts of houſes which derive their names from their ſize or ſhape?

The queſtions here given upon a material object, will apply with greater force to moral diſcuſſions, of which we ſhall ſpeak in order.

The narrative ſtands next to the deſcriptive in the facility of compoſition. As the firſt exerciſe, children might be told ſhort tales in the words of the teacher; the ſubſtance of which ſhould afterwards be delivered in words of their own recollection, and arranged according to their own judgements. And when ſufficiently practiſed in this particular, they ſhould next learn to abridge the hiſtories or biographies they read, by giving outlines of them from their own memory. They ſhould even be called upon to form a character, from what they know of men and manners, and make ſuch a concatenation of events as will form a ſhort ſtory; to which they ſhould affix a moral, drawn entirely

entirely from their knowledge of the world. Nothing can be more conducive to improvement in the language and memory than the formation of abridgements for one's ſelf, in preference to reading thoſe already formed. The comprehenſive turns of expreſſions, and the concentration of many objects within one view, requiſite to an abridgement, demand an exertion in collecting the proper terms, which is particularly beneficial.

The narrative may be ſucceeded by the argumentative, which comprehends moral reaſoning on particular ſubjects; as the virtues and vices of men, their cauſes, effects, advantages, tendencies, &c. After this the ſcholar ought to form an abſtract of the different ſciences of aſtronomy, geography, language, morals, &c. Suppoſe he were ſpeaking of time, he might firſt begin by ſhewing its diviſion, its advantages, the number of ways by which it may be deſtroyed; with a variety of remarks upon the methods of ſpending

it. By theſe gradual ſteps he may be led to digeſt the moſt complex ſentences, and purſue regular trains of thought without any difficulty.

ON LANGUAGES.

THERE are many local motives for learning particular languages, originating in the peculiar circumſtances of individuals, which do not fall under the ſubject of education. But there are ſeveral other reaſons which have a univerſal application. Difference of language is a bar to the communication of thought, and the intervention of reciprocal pains and pleaſures. Although there are more ways of diſcovering each other's ſentiments than by words, yet that is the principle upon which all others depend for their exiſtence. To ſtop the progreſs of communication between

between individuals or nations, is to prevent the current of humanity, to deprive us of as many enjoyments as there are individuals whom we exclude from our ſociety. The ſphere of our actions becomes circumſcribed, we grow ſelfiſh in our attachments and narrow in our views. Not only our actions but our knowledge is limited by the want of a common language. The ſentiments of others are more than three parts of our knowledge. How confined muſt the obſervation of any individual be, unaided by the reſt of mankind! The infinite variety of paths which each perſon marks out for himſelf, is a ſource of improvement to others; but each ſeparately would be too inſignificant to bring any thing to perfection. There is a mutual dependance of all men upon each other, in ſcience as in human life. Some may be more fortunate in their opportunities of making reflections, and digeſting them into forms peculiar to themſelves; but ſtill there is no individual

who can aſſume a ſhare of wiſdom to himſelf which has not originated partly in the cultivation of others: an opinion which ought to ſuppreſs the undue pretenſions of ſome, and elevate the hopes of others.

The application of theſe opinions to the ſtudy of languages is evident. The ſubſtitute of tranſlations is very imperfect. It ſerves to convey information, but it ſhuts the door againſt general communication. Human ſociability is curtailed. This is no leſs an objection againſt the preference given to the ancient rather than the modern languages, than againſt tranſlations. We can have no intercourſe with the ancients but through the medium of their works. Conſequently, unleſs we ſet an extraordinary value upon their performances, we ſhould not feel a ſufficient motive to ſtudy Latin or Greek merely for the ſake of reading the opinions of the ancients in their own language. This value has been ſet upon theſe writings, and men have devoted their lives to the

ſtudy

ſtudy of the claſſics for this purpoſe only, but whether ſuch a ſentiment is perfectly philoſophical will admit of doubt. What an ill opinion muſt we form of humanity and its improvability, if we conceive the ancient productions to merit as much attention as thoſe of the moderns! After the numerous inventions that have been made, and the vaſt experience which men have had, it ſeems a contradiction to ſuppoſe that more pleaſure can be derived from reading the productions of men who lived in a comparative ſtate of ignorance. We are told that their poetry is too ſublime not to be admired. I acknowledge that ignorance, ſuperſtition, and folly, may all be combined in poetry, without deſtroying its nature. Poetry ſeldom contains any good moral. It is generally a gingle of words rather than a combination of ſolid ideas. It conſiſts principally in ſpinning out a general idea, into a number of particulars elucidated and exemplified by ſimilies, analogies,

compariſons, figures, and other intervening expreſſions remotely connected with the ſubject. This is the caſe with the three famous poems, the Iliad, the Æneid, and Paradiſe Loſt. The firſt abounds with ſimilies, epithets, fruitleſs repetitions, and a long liſt of proper names, with ſcarcely a moral ſentiment through the whole work. The paltry ſelfiſhneſs of Agamemnon, ſupported by power, may be contraſted with the furious and malignant indignation of Achilles, ſupported by nothing but ſuperior valour. But certainly we are not indebted to the poet for any ſtriking picture of theſe vices. The ſtory, however, is full of the abſurdities of the Heathen mythology and the rude manners of the age, and, if conſidered as an hiſtorical and geographical production, certainly deſerves the labour of a peruſal; but as a poem, it loſes all its merit with us, whatever it might have had with the Greeks. The verſification is loſt in our language, and no one can judge

judge of its harmony who has not heard the ſounds of the original when ſpoken. The author muſt be conſidered as a man of acute obſervation, who, had he lived in a more enlightened age, and heard of or ſeen any thing beſides the arrangement of battles, the formation of arms, the manner of dying in the field, the interpoſition of goddeſſes, &c. would have written on more valuable ſubjects. This remark applies with nearly the ſame force to Virgil. He is not ſo verboſe nor ſo barren of moral and ſolid ſentiment, but not leſs ſuperſtitious. The author of Paradiſe Loſt has given an example of the extravagances to which the human mind will yield, when it has left the region of poſſibility and common ſenſe. Out of one chapter in the bible, united with his own rigid opinions, he has formed a tale, the particulars of which are the mere offspring of his own imagination.

The poetry of the ancients forms the principal ſubjects of reading for young people

people in ſtudying the claſſics, for which reaſon I have ſpoken more fully upon it. Their hiſtorical writings are ſeldom brought into notice, although they would be more intelligible and intereſting. Nevertheleſs we cannot compare the hiſtorians or moral writers of the early ages with the moderns. Their ſphere of obſervation was ſo much more limited: they had ſo few nations within their view compared with ours: their moral ſentiments could not be ſo accurate, for want of the experience and reflections which we have had the opportunity of making. In theſe remarks, my object is not to depreciate the ſtudy of antiquity, but to weigh the comparative merits of each. Men know no more of moderation in their attachments to authors, than to wine or women. All have their favourite paſſions, which only vary in the object. Antiquity is the infancy of man: his ideas of nature, of man, and of himſelf, are all narrow, and his language muſt bear a pro-

proportion to the knowledge which is conveyed through its means. In order, therefore, for a boy to acquire a thorough knowledge of man, he ought to be acquainted with him in all the ſtages of his improvement, and particularly with his language, which has laid the foundation for all others in the world; it enables him to obſerve the materials of which his own and others are compoſed.

This is a ſufficient reaſon for teaching children Latin and Greek after they have been made familiar with the conſtruction of language in general, and the particular conſtruction of their native language. It may, however, be fairly ſuppoſed, that after having endeavoured to expoſe the fallacy of teaching boys words before things, it muſt appear abſurd in the extreme, to make a boy learn his own language through the medium of a foreign one, which is at the ſame time nearly the moſt ancient and complicated. This prejudice is now much leſs prevalent than it

was,

was, but it is not perfectly eradicated from the minds of parents, and on that account deſerves ſome conſideration.

The complexity becomes double, when, to the ignorance of any ſignification in the ſounds of his own language, is added the total ignorance even of the ſounds in any other. What is more common than for children who cannot read Engliſh words, to be obliged to commit Latin ones to their memory? But, without ſpeaking of what may be conceived extraordinary caſes, let us proceed to thoſe who are ſufficiently far advanced, to enter upon the conſtruction of the language. The Latin and Greek contain more inflections than moſt other languages, which render the rules of concord and government more particularly neceſſary. Theſe are ſubjects altogether unintelligible to a boy. He can form no diſtinct conception of what is underſtood by a noun, verb, caſe, tenſe, &c. He has no clue to guide him in diſtinguiſhing theſe differen

ferent objects from one another; of courſe, rules founded on unintelligible ſubjects will be equally ſo, and add likewiſe to the perplexity of the learner. Suppoſe we analyſe the ſimpleſt rule in Latin in ſupport of our argument.

"One ſubſtantive governs another, ſignifying different things, in the genitive."

Firſt, there is the idea of a ſubſtantive, which, for want of knowing the nature of ſubſtances, will be perfectly obſcure.

In the next place, the knowledge of government muſt depend upon the knowledge of the words which govern and are governed. Moreover, the difference of things muſt be unintelligible to thoſe who never receive any inſtruction on their nature. And laſt of all, to underſtand the nature of caſes, requires the previous knowledge of a noun, and the relative ſituations and terminations peculiar to each. All which is a neceſſary introduction to diſtinguiſhing the genitive caſe from the reſt.

This

This analyſis will clearly evince the abſolute neceſſity of preparing the mind of a ſcholar, by an acquaintance with general principles, for the ſtudy of any language, if he be ever expected to underſtand what he learns.

To ſupply the defect of the underſtanding, the memory is here reſorted to as the uſual reſervoir of all the ſenſeleſs jargon that is honored with the name of knowledge. Frequent and burdenſome repetitions of the rules are abſolutely neceſſary to procure a durable retention. No age or period of life is exempt from the taſk. The memory is ſo fallacious when unaided by the judgement, that boys of twelve, thirteen, or fourteen, will be obliged to continue the ſame routine after having perhaps tranſlated the moſt difficult authors, and completed a courſe of exerciſes on all theſe rules. Thus does the work of a week or a month to an enlightened mind, become the drudgery of many years.

In

In order to preſerve a conſiſtency in the mechaniſm, literal tranſlations are neceſſary on his leaving the grammar. The memory is ſtill exerciſed without one effort of the underſtanding: no application of the rules, no developement of ſentences. It would be an abſurd attempt to apply or develope what he does not underſtand. Suppoſe any application be required after a length of time, neither the memory nor judgement is required. Gueſſing, on the part of the ſcholar, or direct explanation on the part of the teacher, ſupplies their place; but ſtill no exertion is required that can give the former independence of thought. He cannot refer to his grammar, write a tenſe in a verb, conſtruct a ſentence, or give its ſenſe in Engliſh, without the aid of his maſter. He cannot take the words in their proper order. He does not ſee the neceſſity for firſt ſelecting the nominative or ſubject of the ſentence, then the verb or predicate, and afterwards the accuſative or object.

Of

Of courſe he cannot analyſe a complex ſentence, and form clear diſtinctions between the dependants on the nominative, thoſe on the verb, and thoſe on the accuſative. Much leſs can he trace the dependance and connection of ſentences on one another. Notwithſtanding theſe difficulties, ſome people are ſo inconſiſtent as to oblige ſcholars to tranſlate authors without any aids from Engliſh tranſlations, or any previous inſtruction. It may be eaſily conceived that the taſk is both ſevere and unprofitable to moſt learners.

Writing exerciſes contributes but very little to an acquaintance with the conſtruction of the language. A boy never ſwims without corks. He is a ſlave to rule, implicitly follows the directions of his maſter, gueſſes at what is not told him, commits errors, has them corrected for him, and concludes his taſk with more juſt ſatisfaction than he begun it. It would be deplorable if human nature could be contented with the want of ſenſe.

Having

Having ſpoken thus far upon the defects of education in this particular, we ſhall now proceed to point out the order and method of teaching the languages.

French, German, Italian, &c. deſerve an attention next to the Engliſh, on account of their reſemblance in genius and turn of expreſſion; and, as we have before noticed, a perſon will derive more pleaſure and improvement from peruſing the ſentiments of thoſe whoſe cuſtoms and occupations are more in uniſon with his own. Beſides, no ſmall ſhare of improvement in ſtyle is to be derived from the peruſal of good writers in all languages. For, ſetting aſide the idiomatic turns of a ſentence, or the various acceptations of terms which caprice or accident have introduced, a good ſtyle in one language will ſerve as a model for others. This is a clear deduction from the connection between the arrangement of our words and thoughts. It will be equally perſpicuous and forcible in all languages.

This

This advantage is conſiderably diminiſhed in reading claſſical authors, from the wide difference in the arrangement of words and their acceptations. But after having acquired a knowledge of the former, it would be peculiarly uſeful to ſtudy the latter, for the reaſons above mentioned.

In order to facilitate this ſtudy, the exerciſes may be purſued with peculiar advantage by obſerving a regularity.

The inflections are generally the firſt objects of inſtruction, but it ſeems preferable at the beginning to learn a number of words under each part of ſpeech; for as exact a proportion as poſſible ought to be preſerved between the order of acquiring words and that of receiving ideas. Children view the objects of perception firſt, independent of all their properties; and boys will find it much more ſerviceable to become familiar with words before they proceed to their changes. The formation of words may be afterwards taught according to the three modes of derivation,

derivation, inflection, and compoſition, uſed before in Engliſh. Derivation leſſens the number of objects for the memory. By learning the roots or ſimple terms, and the general prefixes and affixes, as, *con*, *pre*, *ad*, *af*, *be*, *ent*, *ge*, &c. and *ty*, *niſs*, *te*, *tas*, *us*, *ig*; in Engliſh, French and Latin, German, &c. he is enabled to compound many words before unknown, as, for example, *unfortunate*, *unglücklich*, the root is *fortune*, *glück*, with the affix *ate*, *lich*, *fortunate*, *glücklich*, and the prefix *un*, *unfortunate*, *unglücklich*. Compoſition is equally uſeful with derivation, in explaining the nature of complex ideas, and affording the ſcholar a variety of terms without learning them in a compound ſtate.

In Latin and French very few words are compounded; but in the latter prepoſitions are ſubſtituted. In Greek, German, and Engliſh, compounds are very numerous.

Inflection, though laſt conſidered here, is of the firſt importance to the ſcholar.

The

The relations of perſon, caſe, time, number, &c. are perpetually recurring in a ſentence, which cannot be underſtood without them. There is a connection between the nature of inflections, and that of things, a ſtrict attention to which would aid the memory and exerciſe the powers.

The article where it exiſts, the adjective and pronoun, have generally the ſame termination in all languages with the ſubſtantive.

In Greek the reſemblance is very ſtriking. The termination ο, the maſculine article η, the feminine (ſometimes α), and το, the neuter, are generally the ſame in adjectives, pronouns, and ſubſtantives. The maſculine and neuter genitive of moſt is υ, and the dative ω, the feminine ης, and the dative η. By the addition of an ν to theſe vowels, the accuſative is formed. The vowels α and ο, with ι, form the caſes of the dual and plural, but ων is the genitive plural of all genders; των, ταμιων, τελωνων, ἀγαθων, παντων.

In

In Latin the terminations run in an analogical manner with thoſe of the Greek: *i* inſtead of *o*, *æ* inſtead of *η*, *um* inſtead of *ο*; *m* for the accuſative, inſtead of *ν*, as, *domini*, *boni*, *tui*; *muſæ*, *bonæ*, *tuæ*; *dominum*, *bonum*, *tuum*.

In German the reſemblance is equally apparent. In the genitive, maſculine and neuter, *es*, as *des*, *Buches*, *gutes*, *meines*, *welches*, the dative *m*, or *em*, as *dem*, *gutem*, *ihm*, *meinem*, *welchem*; the accuſative *n*. In the genitive feminine *er*, as *der*, *guter*, *meiner*, *dieſer*, *welcher*. The accuſative *e*, like the nominative, as *die*, *eine*, *gute*, *dieſe*, *welche*, *ſie*. The caſes of the plural the ſame, every where *e*. This will ſuffice to ſhew the connection in the noun and its dependants; it will appear ſtill more evident in the verb. There are but three primitive points of time; preſent, paſt, and future, from which ſpring others; and from the inflections of theſe three ſpring thoſe of others.

The indicative is the primitive mood;

the inflections of the other moods therefore are derived from thoſe of the indicative.

In Greek and Latin this is more remarkable than in the modern languages.

Suppoſe we take the verb, τιω, τισω, τετικα.

From the preſent comes the imperfect, 2d aoriſt, and the 2d future, τιω, ετιον, τιῶ.

From the perfect the pluperfect, τετικα, τετικειν.

From the firſt future the firſt aoriſt, τισω ετισα.

From the preſent indicative the preſent ſubjunctive, optative, imperative, infinitive, and participle, τιω, τιω, τιοιμι, τιε, τιειν, τιων.

In like manner the perfect, τετικα, τετικω, τετικοιμι, τετικε, τετικεναι, τετικως.

And the future, τισω, ετισα, τισω, τισοιμι, τισαιμι, τισον, τισειν, τισαι, τισων, τισας.

The ſame remarks apply to the Latin or other languages.

The

The utility of ſuch rules ſeems too evident to require any illuſtration. It is the natural operation of the mind to combine and form analogies, as a relief to the memory; and when once inſtructed in the method of ſo doing, men will have recourſe to it with pleaſure and facility. But boys are not allowed the privilege of knowing how to begin. Every rule is conſtructed for them in their grammar, which they probably never read. On the contrary, the leſs real information that is given a boy, the more exerciſe is left for the faculties. Nothing, however, ought to be omitted that can pave the way for his inveſtigation. Explanations and examinations ſhould be repeated, according to the neceſſity of the caſe. His grammar ought to be a ſyllabus, or collection of general heads, the particulars of which he ſhould ſupply by his own labour, aided by proper queſtions.

On the inflections, for inſtance, which is the preſent ſubject of diſcuſſion, a boy

ſhould firſt commit them to memory mechanically, and then apply the terminations to other words which may occur promiſcuouſly in a ſtrange book. Suppoſe the example in his grammar to be *penna*, which he has learnt in all its caſes, then ſhew him *fœminas*, *muſam*, *togæ*, and require an explanation of the caſe and number; as the termination is the object of memory, let nothing elſe be confounded with it; aſk him whether he has ſeen any thing like *as*, *am*, and *æ*, inſtead of aſking him whether he has ſeen any word like *fœminas*, *muſam*, and *togæ*. In the one caſe the termination ſtrikes upon the mind independently of every thing elſe, and in the other caſe it is confuſed with the whole word to which it is affixed. This may appear trifling, but great care is neceſſary to avoid any ſort of confuſion; for the mind is formed by a number of ſubtle impreſſions. At the ſame time, the more remote the words are from the knowledge of the ſcholar, the

the greater the exercise. They ought not to be assisted by any previous conception of the meaning of the sentence, nor any familiarity with the book, the page, or particular place in the page, but simply by their recollection of what they have learnt, or a deduction from what they remember. Having proceeded through the verbs, the pupil may perhaps be shewn the word *comprobavissent*, upon which the following queries may be put: What is the derivative syllable? What is the termination *issent*? And what mood, number, and person, does it denote? Is it primitive or derivative? From what tense derived? The answer to these questions demand a constant reference to the grammar, with which he grows perfectly familiar. Thus acquainted with words in their simple and complex state, he will be at no loss to find, by the same methods, the roots of all words in the dictionary, which he may now safely begin to use. By the aid of this and his grammar, he commences a

tranſlation into Engliſh. We ſuppoſe him to have previouſly ſtudied the general principles of ſyntax in a regular manner; he has therefore nothing more than the application to make of what he already knows. This is not a ſufficient difficulty to demand any diſtinct exertion previous to tranſlating; it cannot be acquired more advantageouſly at any time, than while he is comparing the foreign with the native language.

It is uſual to make boys parſe a line or two of the leſſons they have learnt, making the analyſis of words diſtinct from their ſignification. It is forgotten in this caſe, that without a knowledge of each mood, tenſe, number, and perſon, of every word in the ſentence, it is impoſſible to find out its ſignification; and for want of this ſtep, in union with others, boys are ſo much at a loſs to make any ſenſe of a tranſlation. Now ſuppoſe in this ſtage he is not ſufficiently acquainted with the terminations for him to be able to reduce

duce them to the ſimple ſtate in which they are found in the dictionary, he ought to precede every leſſon by an examination of each word in a ſentence; by which he ſhould learn how to trace the inflections in his grammar, and the ſenſe in his dictionary. And, with this preparation, the grammar and dictionary ought to be his only guides. In fact, the uſe of theſe two books ought to be the only object of inſtruction in languages; that is, upon the ſuppoſition that they are not overloaded with uſeleſs materials, and contain only ſimple principles.

Beſides, boys are very ſeldom required to make a proper application of their tranſlation. They generally go through the exerciſe in ſo incorrect a manner as to loſe all the advantages of obſervation. The turn of ſentences, the peculiar order of words in a ſentence, and their different acceptations, are all neglected, while they catch at the general ſenſe, and ſupply the reſt by their own imagination. On the con-

contrary, if a boy conſtrued only one ſentence in a leſſon, he ought to examine every word minutely, as to its formation, its concord, government, and ſignification.

The greateſt care ought to be taken to ſelect the beſt writers, both for ſentiment and ſtyle. The ſtudy of language may be made the vehicle of inſtruction in other particulars, where a boy has been properly prepared; but what can be more premature than to place ſo ſublime and poetic a performance as Fenelon, in the hands of every little boy who may have acquired ſufficient power over the language to tranſlate? A work which contains the reſult of deep erudition, profound reflection, and the moſt abſtract principles of morals and politics, is to be read by a child who can form no conception of a figure in language, nor a ſimple judgement in the moſt common moral action! Such are the inconſiſtencies which perpetually recur in an education arrived

at

at a middle ſtate of refinement. When we reflect on the diſguſting taſk of learning ſuch unmeaning ſtuff, it need not ſurpriſe us that every ſpecies of compulſion ſhould be neceſſary to enforce an imperfect attention. What then muſt have been the pitiable condition of youth in ſchools formerly, where little elſe than the ſenſeleſs jargon of Latin and Greek was forced into their memories by the rigorous ſeverity of thoſe, who having experienced the good effects of the rod and ferula to make them learned, knew of no better method to inſpire others with vigour in the ſame purſuit? Such diſcipline is not, however, at all eſſential in the preſent mode of education, in which a ſhorter road to information is diſcovered, than by depth of reflection or ſteadineſs of attention. But to return to our ſubject: another remark demands our notice before we finiſh this ſection.

Compoſition in foreign languages is equally important as in our own. The exertions

exertions of writing and reading are ſo diſtinct, that nothing leſs than a direct exerciſe can perfect them in either. There are many examples of perſons that can read a foreign language with the ſame facility as a native, who cannot form a ſingle ſentence in the ſame, and *vice verſâ*.

The ſame remark applies to ſpeaking, which ſeems to be unattainable by any other method than an intercourſe with ſpeakers. The practice of learning dialogues by rote, is in uniſon with the prevailing ſuperficiality of education in other particulars. It would be much more uſeful for boys to learn every word in a ſentence diſtinctly and perfectly, and afterwards combine them together by their own efforts in an extemporary exerciſe. They would acquire by that method the habit of conſtructing ſentences in their mind fitted for every occaſion, and the faculty of expreſſing them in the company of others. The practice cannot, indeed,

deed, be ſo beneficial as queſtion and anſwer between the learner and teacher, or any other perſon acquainted with the language; but it may ſerve, perhaps, better as an introduction to the former, becauſe the attention of the ſcholar is not diſtracted between the neceſſity of underſtanding the queſtion and framing the anſwer. He has nothing more to do in this caſe, than to collect the ſingle words, and form them into the ſentence which the teacher repeats to him in his own language. Upon the preſent plan, boys are ſupplied with a few words and ſentences, the application of which is extremely trivial and perfectly accidental; while they remain incapable of combining two words in any other manner, in order to make them ſignificant. Thus does the mind become narrowed, and the exertion weakened. Nor can any other conſequence be expected to flow from a plan of education, ſo totally inadequate to the purpoſe of improvement; for, as we have before obſerved,

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it is uniformly mechanical from the commencement to the concluſion.

Although the truth of the preceding remarks will be generally granted, perhaps there are many who will conceive the preſent ſcheme too complicated and arduous for general practice. This opinion is the unavoidable conſequence of that biaſs for eſtabliſhed modes which cheriſhes indolence. Nevertheleſs it is to be hoped that there are many who will not object to make the trial of a plan which appears to offer ſo many advantages. At the ſame time the author propoſes to leſſen the difficulties attending its execution in ſubſequent publications, adapted to children of all ages.

CONCLUSION.

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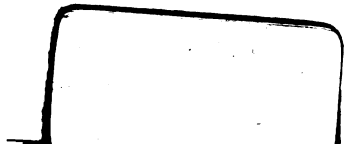
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